

# IN PORTUGAL

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IN PORTUGAL

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# IN PORTUGAL

BY AUBREY F. G. BELL

Oh quem fôra a Portugal,  
Terra que Deus bemdizia !

*Romance*

(O to go to Portugal, land heaven-blest)



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## PREFACE

**T**HE guide-books give full details of the marvellous convents, gorgeous palaces and solemn temples of Portugal, and no attempt is here made to write complete descriptions of them, the very names of some of them being omitted. But the guide-books too often treat Portugal as a continuation, almost as a province of Spain. It is hoped that this little book may give some idea of the individual character of the country, of the quaintnesses of its cities, and of peasant life in its remoter districts.

While the utterly opposed characters of the two peoples must probably render the divorce between Spain and Portugal eternal and reduce hopes of union to the idle dreams of politicians, Portugal in itself contains an infinite variety—the *charnecas* and cornlands of Alemtejo; the hills and moors, pinewoods, corkwoods and olives of Extremadura; the red soil and faint blue mountains of Algarve, with its figs and carobs and palms, and little sandy fishing-bays;

the clear streams and high massive ranges and chimneyless granite villages of Beira Baixa and Beira Alta; the vines and sand-dunes and rice-growing *alagadiços* of Douro; the wooded hills, mountain valleys, flowery meadows and transparent streams and rivers of rainy Minho, with its white and grey scattered houses, its crosses and shrines and chapels, its maize-fields and orchards and tree- or granite-propped vines; and, finally, remote inaccessible Traz-os-Montes, bounded on two sides by Spain, on the South by the Douro, to which its rivers of Spanish origin, Tamega, Tua, Sabor, flow through its range on range of bare mountains, with precipitous ravines and yellow-brown clustered villages among olives, chestnuts and rye. Each of the eight provinces (more especially those of the *alemtejanos*, *minhotos* and *beirões*) preserves many peculiarities of language, customs and dress; and each, in return for hardships endured, will give to the traveller many a day of delight and interest.

MIRANDELLA (TRAZ-OS-MONTES),  
July, 1911.



# CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
PREFACE . . . . .	v
I. CHARACTERISTICS AND CUSTOMS . . . . .	3
II. TRAVELLING IN PORTUGAL . . . . .	18
III. THE CHARM OF ALEMTEJO . . . . .	27
IV. CHARNECAS OF ALEMTEJO . . . . .	33
V. AN EARLY MORNING DRIVE . . . . .	39
VI. THE CITY OF EVORA . . . . .	44
VII. THE CITY OF BEJA . . . . .	50
VIII. IN ALGARVE . . . . .	54
IX. EXTREMADURA . . . . .	63
X. LISBON I. . . . .	71
XI. LISBON II.—ALFAMA . . . . .	81
XII. THE CONVENT AND TOWER OF BELEM . . . . .	85
XIII. CINTRA . . . . .	89
XIV. MAFRA, ALCobaça, ALJUBARROTA, BATALHA . . . . .	99
XV. KING DINIZ AND LEIRIA ON THE LIZ . . . . .	114
XVI. FROM LEIRIA TO THOMAR AND BEIRA BAIXA . . . . .	118
XVII. PINWOODS OF EXTREMADURA . . . . .	124
XVIII. THE SERRA DA ESTRELLA . . . . .	128
XIX. VILLAGES OF THE SERRA . . . . .	136
XX. THE CERCAL OF BUSSACO . . . . .	142

CHAPTER	PAGE
XXI. THE UNIVERSITY OF COIMBRA . . . .	148
XXII. OPORTO . . . . .	157
XXIII. THE PROVINCE OF MINHO . . . . .	163
XXIV. A WAYSIDE INN . . . . .	180
XXV. THROUGH TRAZ-OS-MONTES . . . . .	185
XXVI. WHERE LUSITANIA AND HER SISTER MEET . .	196
XXVII. ON THE OPEN ROAD . . . . .	202
XXVIII. THE PORTUGUESE LANGUAGE . . . . .	207
XXIX. A MODERN PORTUGUESE POET . . . . .	212
INDEX . . . . .	223

IN PORTUGAL





# IN PORTUGAL

## CHAPTER I

### CHARACTERISTICS AND CUSTOMS

A antiga fortaleza,  
A lealdade d'animo e nobreza.—CAMÕES.

(The ancient vigour and loyalty of mind and nobleness.)

CAMÕES speaks of the “ancient” vigour of the Portuguese, but those who imagine the Portuguese of the twentieth century to be a soft and enervated nation will be surprised to find how much quiet determination, persistent work and brave endurance of hardships exists in Portugal. Camões elsewhere (*Lusiads*,<sup>1</sup> v, canto 72) lays fresh stress on loyalty as a fundamental characteristic of the Portuguese :—

Aquella portugueza alta excellencia  
De lealdade firme e obediencia.

, (That noble Portuguese virtue of stout loyalty and obedience.)

The Portuguese can in fact combine loyalty with independence, docility with determination ; they accept a situation which they may not like,

but with a pertinacious looking for better things, persistent rather than restless. Thus during all the time of the Spaniard's domination in Portugal (from 1580 to 1640) many ceased not to look for the return of that King Sebastian who had perished in Africa, but of whose death no certain news had ever been received. But they are often indolent and careless, with fugitive enthusiasms, vague imaginings and a love of words and rhetoric which they share with the Spanish. The name *Algarvio* has come to be the common Portuguese word for a chatterer, but, although the Portuguese of the North are more reserved and morose than the inhabitants of Algarve, they can scarcely be said to be more taciturn.

The Paniberian ideal has been revived from time to time (as by the Spanish statesman Cánovas del Castillo); but the Castilian tends to despise the Portuguese, and the Portuguese returns this dislike in flowing measure. To the uneducated Spaniard, especially, the Portuguese is an inferior being, *muy ruin*, *muy miserable*, and he is the butt of their stories, invariably playing the part of the fool and dupe. This mutual dislike of Spaniard and Portuguese is not based upon a similarity in weaknesses, in which case it would be the more easily intelligible, but rather upon an opposition of excellences, a complete divergence of character. The



thoughtful humaneness of the Portuguese is poles apart from the noble rashness and imprudence of the Spaniard; the Spaniard's restless discontent is replaced in Portugal by what might almost be called a contented melancholy, a "humorous sadness" like that of Jaques in "*As you like it*." They have a resigned, a genial pessimism,<sup>1</sup> a patient, perhaps indolent tolerance, finding relief in sarcasm and irony.

A sentence in one of Eça de Queiroz' "Contos"—"*Esse era um civilizado e accusou logo o governo* ; he, as a civilized man, at once laid the blame (for some lost luggage) upon the Government"—might seem to imply that the discontent of the people in Portugal was as unreasoned as that of the people in Spain, their politics as unruly. But they are in fact much more apt to be indolently indifferent, ever ready to say of a government, whether Monarchist or Republican: "*nem é bom nem é ruim*—it is neither good nor bad." The Portuguese peasant preserves a noble independence, and if at an election he votes as he is directed without a thought or murmur, it is that he is practical, and considers the result of an election to be quite immaterial to his affairs; and he, at least, has none of the *sabujice*<sup>2</sup> that bows down before

<sup>1</sup> Cf. their frequent exclamation *Ora essa*, almost equivalent to *Il ne manquait que cela*.

<sup>2</sup> Span. *ramplonería*—a kind of moral cowardice.

foreign customs, foreign virtues, foreign phrases and fashions.

In courtesy the Portuguese scarcely yield to the Castilians, and if in Portugal characters are not so strongly marked or asserted as in Spain, the Portuguese can nevertheless join to pleasantness of manner a very real firmness of purpose, just as in many parts of the country the blue eyes of the peasants have an expression at once kindly and frank. The Portuguese have a quiet dignity, but personalities are less aggressively emphasized than in Spain; they are vain, but they have not the irascible, susceptible pride of the Spaniard, theirs is a more placid vanity. In their address they are even more high-flown than the Spanish, *Vossa Excellencia* alternating with *Vossemcê* (*Vossa Mercê*, your worship) and *o Senhor* (in the third person, or, especially in Minho and Traz-os-Montes, *meu senhor*).

It is interesting to compare Spanish and Portuguese crowds. A Spanish crowd is so evidently composed of units only momentarily and loosely knit together, a Portuguese crowd is a mass more compact and closely welded; the rumour of a Lisbon holiday-crowd is sufficiently imposing, but it is a continuous roar or murmur, whereas the sound of a Spanish crowd is continually broken into individual shouts and laughter; the latter has the appearance of a

## CHARACTERISTICS AND CUSTOMS 7

fortuitous concourse of atoms, the former of a united multitude.

Naturally so fair a country excites deep love,

amor da patria não movida  
De premio vil, mas alto e quasi eterno,

(Love of country unmoved by low reward, but noble and as it were immortal.)

nor would the Portuguese ever submit for long to a union with Spain, even as an autonomous region.

The two characteristics most fundamentally Portuguese are perhaps a quiet human thoughtfulness and a certain wistful melancholy or *saudade*. The very children are quiet, they seem to have no noisy games ; the voices are soft, the faces meditative. The famous *saudade* of the Portuguese is a vague and constant desire for something that does not and probably cannot exist, for something other than the present, a turning towards the past or towards the future ; not an active discontent or poignant sadness but an indolent dreaming wistfulness. It is not the attribute of poetic idlers only, but belongs also to the toilers in the fields. A popular *cantiga* says—

A ausencia tem uma filha  
Que se chama Saudade,  
Eu sustento mãe e filha  
Bem contra minha vontade.

(Absence has a daughter, whose name is Saudade ; alas, both mother and daughter are mine against my will.)

but as a rule *saudade* is caused by nothing so definite as absence from a person or thing beloved. Real *saudade*, *saudades portuguesas*,<sup>1</sup> need be based on no grief or sorrow (*sem dó, sem mágoa*), as Almeida-Garrett informs us in his poem "A Saudade":—

Saudade, oh saudade amarga e crua,  
 Numen dos ais, do pranto,  
 Deus que os corações sem dó, sem mágoa  
 Tam cruel dilaceras,  
 Sinto, sinto o teu ferro abrimme o peito.

(*Saudade*, harsh and bitter *Saudade*, spirit of cries and lamentation, deity that so cruelly tearest the hearts of men without grief or sorrow, I feel, I feel thy sword piercing my breast.)<sup>2</sup>

The Portuguese, often intensely religious, has too much thoughtful reserve to be a fanatic or priest-ridden; he is of liberal mind, tolerant, fond of progress, and possesses much good practical common-sense. Perhaps he is a little too prone to an inartistic neglect of past traditions and to a love of destruction for destruction's sake, white-washing pillar and capital and turning his convents into barracks. Even in the fifteenth century Gil Vicente, for all his devout religion, was ever ready to attack the monks. He desires to know what they do with their revenues:—

<sup>1</sup> Almeida-Garrett, in a poem entitled "Saudades."

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Camões:—

Agora a saudade do passado,  
 Tormento puro, doce e magoadado.

(And now the longing for the past, pure torment bitter-sweet.)

A renda que apanhais  
 O melhor que vós podeis  
 Nas igrejas não gastais,  
 Aos pobres pouco dais,  
 E não sei que lhe fazeis.

(Of the income you obtain  
 By any means you may,  
 The churches have no gain  
 From alms you still abstain,  
 How you spend it who shall say?)

He wishes all the monks to be planted in the sand, head downwards, heels in air :—

Y plantar todos los frailes  
 En la tierra que no es buena,  
 Las coronas so el arena,  
 Las piernas hacia los aires.

Almeida-Garrett, an ardent Liberal, as an artist regretted the disappearance of the monks from Portugal. <sup>1</sup> But now the priests are forbidden to wear their cassocks, many of them having but a slovenly appearance in slouching black suits, soft shirts, and bowlers or black squash hats ; and by a decree of the Republic the students of Coimbra are not obliged to wear their gowns. Thus Progress extends its dreary net of grey uniformity over the land ; and the neglect of old traditions is one of the contradictions in the character of a people whose eyes turn willingly to the past ; just as it is difficult to reconcile their humaneness with the barbaric neglect of prisons

<sup>1</sup> No ponto de vista artistica porém o frade faz muita falta.— Artistically, however, the monks are a great loss. “ Viagens na minha terra.” 2 vols. Lisbon. 1846.



and prisoners that has been so often noted in Portugal.

The fondness of the Portuguese for flowers is shown in every town and village, the sorriest hovel being often redeemed by a tinpot of magnificent carnations, and many a tiny *quinta* being set in a splendid garden of fruits and flowers. To their fondness for song and music witness the many *cantigas*, often improvised and sung by the peasants, sometimes to the accompaniment of the guitar. Some of these *cantigas* have real poetical feeling, as—

Oh que linda rosa branca  
 Aquella roseira tem ;  
 Debaixo ninguem lhe chega,  
 Lá acima não vae ninguem.

(The white rose tree has flowered,  
 It has a fair white rose ;  
 Below no man may reach it  
 And above no one goes.)

Or

Já o caminho tem herva,  
 Já o atalho tem feno :  
 Quando me encontro contigo  
 O dia é sempre pequeno.

(The road is full of weeds  
 And uncut stands the hay  
 When I am with you speeds  
 All too fast the day.)

Or

O cravo depois de seco  
 Foi-se queixar ao jardim,  
 A rosa lhe respondeu :  
 Por tempo todo tem fim.

(The withered carnation  
To the garden complained,  
But the rose made answer :  
In time all things must end.)

Or

Por te amar deixei a Deus,  
Vê lá que gloria perdi ;  
Agora vejo-me só,  
Sem Deus, sem gloria, sem ti.

(For thee what joy I lost  
Since to love thee God I left ;  
And now I am alone,  
Of God and thee bereft.)

Or they are epigrammatic :—

Tambem o mar é casado,  
Tambem o mar tem mulher,  
E casado com a areia,  
Bate nella quando quer.<sup>1</sup>

(The ocean too is married,  
He has taken the sand to wife,  
Since he can beat upon it  
When he wills to be at strife.)

Or mere cradle songs :—

O meu menino tem sonho,  
Se tem sonho vae dormir,  
A Virgem Nossa Senhora  
O ha de vir cobrir.

(My little babe is sleepy,  
And sleepy he shall sleep,  
While over him the Virgin  
Comes a watch to keep.)

---

<sup>1</sup> A more chivalrous version, however, gives the last line :—

Dá-lhe beijos quando quer.

Or simple riddles, as that of the rope used for tying loads on the ox-carts :—

Vae ao pinhal encolhida,  
E vem estendida.

(It goes to the pine-wood in a coil and comes back in strained toil.)

The singing is less harsh than that of the peasants of Spain, but not less sad, although in a softer strain. Eça de Queiroz<sup>1</sup> wrote of work in Portugal that it was *todo feito a cantar*, and the following lines occur in a long poem by Camões :—

Canta o caminhante ledo  
No caminho trabalhoso  
Por entre o espesso arvoredos,  
E de noite o temeroso  
Cantando refreia o medo.  
Canta o preso docemente  
Os duros grilhões tocando ;  
Canta o segador contente,  
E o trabalhador cantando  
O trabalho menos sente.

(The wayfarer with song  
Gaily beguiles the way  
The deepening woods among,  
And when night clokes the day  
The timid grows more strong  
Singing ; the prisoner sings  
While fingering his chains ;  
The reaper's song blithe rings,  
And solace of his pains  
Song to each toiler brings.)

---

<sup>1</sup> Esse trabalho que em Portugal parece a mais segura das alegrias e a festa sempre incansavel, porque é todo feito a cantar.— Work which in Portugal seems the surest of joys and an untiring festival since it is ever accompanied by song.

Perhaps it is no exaggeration to say that two-thirds of the work in Portugal is done by the women. To them the Portuguese word *mourejar* is really applicable, since in fact they work like Moors or slaves—*mourejam*. Everywhere they work in the fields and appear to bear the brunt of the labour. In one field the woman in the heat of the day draws up bucket after bucket of water, while the man sits perched in a shady olive-tree; in a neighbouring field a man watches six women at work among the maize; in a third a group of women stand working in the summer sun while a group of men sit at the same work under a vine-trellis. Everywhere are to be seen women with huge loads of immense weight, while the men accompany them empty-handed. The man lies in his ox-cart and must have many a *cigarro* and a *copa* of wine or brandy after his hard day's work; or he sits at his counter and bids his wife go out into the cruel sunshine to fetch a heavy *bilha* of water or other provisions. Women work in the quarries, women row heavy barges; wherever there is hard work women are to be found.

Recently in a strike the agricultural labourers at Beja demanded 800 *réis* a day (for the long harvest days), but for the women their demand was for little over a half this sum; at present the men receive 420 *réis* and the women 240 (one shilling). Since, however, the women work

twice as hard as the men, and two wrongs make a right, the injustice is only apparent. Certainly, at least, the women of Portugal cannot be charged with indolence. The demand of 800 *réis* may seem excessive when we think of Canons with 600 *réis* a day, *cantonniers* with from 300 to 400 a day (including Sundays),<sup>1</sup> schoolmasters with 15 *milreis* a month, librarians with from 150 to 800 *milreis* a year (all these paid by the State);<sup>2</sup> but the demand was, of course, only for a few days in the year.

The peasants, for all their poverty and hard work, maintain many a quaint custom of simple gaiety. In Minho, on the Day of the Kings, are held the *janeiras* (Januaries), when the young men go round the village, house by house, singing; if they are not given money, or at least a glass of wine, the compliments of their song are turned to insult:—

Esta casa é de breu,  
Aqui mora algum judeu.

On the last day of April *maios* (Mays) are placed in the windows—branches of broom adorned with ribbons and flowers. The legend says that a branch of broom was placed at night upon the window of the house in which Christ

<sup>1</sup> One *cantoneiro*, in Alementejo, earned 17 *vintens* a day (340 *réis*); another, in Traz-os-Montes, 11 *vintens* (220 *réis*).

<sup>2</sup> Soldiers during their years of service receive from the State one *vintem* (if quartered at Lisbon, a *putaco*). For the English value of these sums, see page 22.



was, as a signal for Him to be taken ; but next morning there was a similar branch of broom in the windows of all the houses.

On the eve of St. John, the greatest rustic festival of the year—

Cantam moças, cantam velhas,  
Na noite de São João

(Young and old sing alike on the eve of St. John)—

great baskets of magnificent huge blue thistles (*alcachofras*), worthy to adorn princes' houses, are in all the markets (at Lisbon as elsewhere). They are not sold in bunches to deck rooms, but singly, at five *réis* apiece, and girls burn them in candles at midnight and then set them in the window. If in the morning sun the burnt fringe of blue appears, as it often does, to be still in flower, then their lovers are true.

In some parts keening (*carper*) is still in vogue, although the *carpimentos* were forbidden as early as in the fifteenth century. At Santa Isabel do Monte (Minho) till recently, if not at the present day, it was the custom to place a small *bilha* of water, bread dipped in wine, and a five *réis* piece in the coffin.

The deep piety of the North, contrasting with the more sceptical temperament of the South, is accompanied by many superstitious fears. In Minho there are spirits (*borborinhos*) in the air, and spirits, often malignant, in the solitude of the hills or in the depths of the forest. Not very

many months ago, at a small village called Barconça, a woman was believed to be possessed by the spirit of her deceased aunt; the parish priest refused to exorcize, but fortunately another priest was found willing to do so, and all was well.

Drinking is less rare in Portugal than in Spain, or is held less in disgrace. In Spain the word *borracho* is a deadly insult; in Portugal the word *bebedo* (in Algarve *escarado*) is commonly used. In many parts the only drink obtainable is wine or a white brandy,<sup>1</sup> the two never failing possessions of every village *venda*, so that the peasant is forced to drink a *copa* of wine or brandy whenever he wishes to drink anything but water; and even the coffee, when it is to be had, is profaned by the addition of brandy or rum. There is a *cantiga*:—

Uma canada  
 Não é nada,  
 Um quartão  
 Alegra o coração.

(A single pint  
 There's nothing in 't,  
 But a gallon may  
 Make the heart gay.)<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Sometimes made from the berries of the *arbutus* trees, which in Minho occasionally cover a whole hillside with their vivid green.

<sup>2</sup> A *canada*, however, is considerably more than a pint, being indeed nearly two *litres*. A *quartão* is apparently not known as a liquid measure. Perhaps it should be *quarteirão*, a sixteenth part of a

The *algarvios*, when intending to go to a *venda*, say merely, "Let us go to that of so-and-so—*vámos na* (sc. *venda*) *de fulano*." Often in villages the amount of brandy drunk is considerable, not that there is much drinking to excess, but that steadily every day *copas* of brandy are drunk as a stimulant for lack of good food and coffee. The old Portuguese customs and dress and characteristics are doomed to perish, they are already fast disappearing. At least we may hope that the advance of progress, levelling quaint traditions and delightful ceremonies, will bring a greater measure of well-being to these remote villages which fascinate the passing visitor but are pleasanter to look on than to live in.

*canada*, the first part of the verse referring to wine, the second to brandy. The principal measures are as follows :—

A tonel (=1000 litres)	= 2 pipas
A pipa	= 25 cantaros (21 at Oporto)
A cantaro (or almude)	= 2 potes
A pote (the old alqueire)	= 6 canadas
A canada	= 4 quartilhos
A quartilho	= 4 quarteirões.

The word *barril* is less usual in Portugal than the words *pipa* or *tonel*. In Castille the *carreteros* call *barriles* little clay vessels that serve them instead of the leathern *bota*, and are shaped like a small flat round loaf stood on end, with a small handle. The name comes from *barro*, clay, but they are also made of osier lined with pitch.

## CHAPTER II

### TRAVELLING IN PORTUGAL

“Acima, acima, gageiro,<sup>1</sup>  
Acima, ao tope real !  
Olha se inxergas Hespanha  
Areias de Portugal.”  
“Alviçaras, capitão,  
Meu capitão general !  
Já vejo terras d’Hespanha  
Areias de Portugal.”—*Romance.*

(“Climb up, midshipman, up to the main topgallantmast, and see if you can sight Spain and the shores of Portugal.”)

“Oh news, good news, my captain, for now can I see the lands of Spain and the shores of Portugal.”)

Eis aquí, quasi cume da cabeça  
Da Europa toda, o reino Lusitano,  
Onde a terra se acaba e o mar começa,  
E onde Phebo repousa no Oceano.—*CAMÕES.*

(But lo, as it were the crown of the head of all Europe, the Lusitanian realm, where the land ceases and the sea begins, and where Phœbus sinks into the ocean.)

**T**HE best season for travelling in Portugal is the end of April and the beginning of May—

<sup>1</sup> In other versions he is called *marinheiro*, *marujo*, *marujinho*, *piloto*, *pilotinho*, *p’riquito*, *Pedro*, *chiquito*, *gageirinho*.

—pelo mes de Abril,  
De Maio antes um dia,  
Quando lirios e rosas  
Mostram mais sua alegria.

(—in the month of April,  
A day before the month of May,  
For then lilies and roses  
Are seen in best array.)

but certain parts, as Bussaco or the “fresca serra de Cintra,” are pleasant even in late summer. The month of June, although in a land where already the March sun burns the lady in her palace—

Sol de Março  
Queima a dama no paço—

the sun may for many shine with too fierce a ray, has the advantage of being often entirely rainless. The peasants look for a cloudless June and a grey month of May : “Maio pardo, Junho claro.” In June the hay is cut—

Feno alto e baixo  
Em Junho é segado—

and rain in June is said to spoil the wine and oil, and to give no bread<sup>1</sup> :—

Agua pelo São João  
Tira azeite e vinho,  
E não dá pão.

In June, but for an occasional thunderstorm,

<sup>1</sup> Another rustic saying of June is :—

Lavra pelo São João  
Se queres haver pão.

(Plough at the season of St. John if you would have bread.)



a *tempesta* in the *serras*, the sky is ever a cloudless blue of clearest turquoise, or blue and white with floating rainless clouds.

The facilities of travel are greater in Portugal than in Spain, the officials are less official, the regulations less inquisitorial, whether this is due to common-sense, courtesy, or indolence. But the trains are few, and those who wish to travel with any comfort are frequently obliged to hire carriages, the *carro de correio* (and often there is not even a *carro de correio*), though lighter and less utterly inconvenient than the Spanish *diligencia*, scarcely coming within the category of things comfortable. In the trains there is less incentive to travel third-class than in Spain, since the third-class travellers have not the same interest for the foreigner; he misses the "mirth and galliardize" of a Spanish company. Characteristically, the benches are more comfortable than in Spain, rounded instead of straight; and in hot weather the plain wooden seats are preferable to the neglected, dusty cushions of the first-class carriages.

A few of Portugal's hôtels are excellent, but the hôtels and *hospedarias* of the small towns and villages, though clean, are very primitive, and the beds are of a notorious hardness. Even at the best hôtel at Mafra one may be convinced that the marble so lavishly used in the building of the convent has also provided slabs for the

mattresses, and at Braga, which considers itself to be the third town of Portugal, the beds are made of blocks of granite. Many a night will the traveller spend pondering over the Portuguese saying :—

Tres horas dorme o santo,  
Cuatro ou cinco o que não é tanto.

(The saint sleeps hours three,  
And four or five they who less sainted be.)

The inns are of many kinds, *taberna*, *venda*, *estalagem*, *hospedaria*. The *estalagem* (corresponding to the Spanish *posada*) often has a shop or *venda* opening at the back into the kitchen, and a court where the *carreiros* put up their carts and mules and donkeys. A steep stairway along a wall leads to one or more bare, clean, whitewashed rooms, with brick floor and a few cheap ornaments, which serve as the principal bedrooms, the carters sleeping on rugs or a mattress thrown upon the ground in the court below.

But most villages have a *hospedaria* (the Spanish *casa de huéspedes*), a little difficult to find since they have no sign-board, in order to avoid paying the *hospedaria* tax. The *hospedaria* generally has one or more permanent guests, paying about fifteen *milreis* a month, the village notary (*notario* or *tabellião*) or perhaps an officer quartered in the village. They are whitewashed scrupulously outside and in, and are as bare as

the *estalagens*, although in the smaller villages the walls of the dining-room will probably be covered with plates of hideous design between many pictures, one of which is often a coloured portrait of Camões. The upper storey is a succession of bedrooms opening one into the other in an inextricable maze, with a rough floor of red bricks, and completely bare except for a few sacred pictures, plain wooden chairs and nail-studded coffers. The price is about a *milreis* a day, a separate meal costing a *cruzado*.<sup>1</sup> Not far from the dining-room is the kitchen, a large room with immense hearth or *lareira*; a row of chairs is set beneath the chimney, and the chimneys (in Alemtejo) go up in their full breadth to the roof (hence the huge chimney-blocks on Alemtejan roofs).

The meals are: *almoço*, at about ten o'clock in the morning, and *jantar*, at about five o'clock in the afternoon, hours not unreasonable in a hot climate, although at first they give an

<sup>1</sup> The chief coins are:—

Copper	5	<i>réis</i>	
„	10	„	
„	20	„	( <i>um vintem</i> = roughly one penny)
Nickel	50	„	( <i>meia tostão</i> )
„	100	„	( <i>uma tostão</i> )
Silver	200	„	
„	500	„	
„	1000	„	( <i>um milreis</i> ).

40 *réis* are called a *pataco* (twopence), 400 *réis* a *cruzado*, and a million *réis* a *conto* (a little over £200).

impression of dining on the following day. The peasants, however, *almoçam* early, *jantam* at midday and at dusk have a third meal, *ceia*, supper. The luncheon or breakfast, *almoço*, in Portugal ends with eggs, coming after fish and meat and immediately before the dessert, although this is contrary to the Roman tradition; and after the *jantar*, *chá* (tea) is almost invariably drunk, usually without milk. The food is plain and good, not cooked in oil as at Spanish *posadas*.<sup>1</sup> But especially will the hungry traveller enjoy humble *venda* meals in remote regions, yellow maize-bread and black coffee, rice and *bacalhao*, *ovos estrelados* ("starred eggs," an excellent method half-way between frying and *œufs au plat*), light white wine or red (*vinho verde*) or *maduro*, rye-bread and coarse *pão de trigo*.

Some of the *hôtels* in the small towns even have a "bath-room with hot and cold water," whether this is, as at Covilhã, a kind of dark cupboard with just room for a bath, to which *cantaros* of hot and cold water are brought, or, as at Bragança, a shed in a cobbled yard. At Alcacer do Sal, Castello Branco and other small towns some of the rooms are perfectly airless, without windows, and almost pitch dark, opening one into another. In the *hôtel* at

<sup>1</sup> To the Spanish peasant Portuguese food seems very insipid and of little nourishment, *muy flaca*.



Alcacer a man, asked how he could breathe (during a single night) in one of these rooms, made the surprising answer that it was "only for one month."

Everywhere the traveller will find, in the unfrequented parts as well as in the large cities, ignorance supplemented by willingness and courtesy. The ignorance is great; he will be asked if England is not Oporto, or if England is farther away than Lisbon; or, if he wishes to know how to spell the name of some remote village and asks for it to be written down, he will be directed to the post-office, the *casa do Correio*, "for there they can write." The region of Algarve, with 250,000 inhabitants, has 200 schools (and a single inspector); but Algarve is not the province where the proportion of those who cannot read or write is greatest. Probably Traz-os-Montes, Alemtejo and Beira Baixa are the provinces of least education, but the ignorance and backwardness of villages in Extremadura, not many leagues from Lisbon, is surprising.

And the ignorance extends to agriculture; the wide cornlands of Alemtejo are reaped with sickles by lines of thirty and forty men and women, and the corn is threshed by driving mules, oxen or donkeys through it, or by beating out the sheaves against a stone. The olives, too, are sometimes spoilt by being beaten down with sticks instead of being gathered by hand,



and, if the owner of the olive-trees has no *lagar* (press), they are kept, till they can be pressed, in circles of stones (called *tulhas*). Often the produce of the most fertile districts is thus diminished in value, but as a rule the peasants are intelligent and not unwilling to receive new ideas. To them the common phrase *boa terra* means not "good land" in the sense of fertile soil producing corn and wine and oil, but a town with tall houses, paved streets, and, if possible, a railway-station, while a remote village in however rich a soil is *terra fraca*, "weak land."

An example of the greater facilities of every kind to be found in Portugal as compared with Spain, is seen in the public libraries. At Madrid Señor Burell, when Minister of Education, visited the *Biblioteca Nacional* and came away with the remark that everything was so ordered there that those who went once had no inclination to return. At the *Bibliotheca Nacional* of Lisbon,<sup>1</sup> on the contrary, books are supplied with quickness and intelligence, and as many at one time as one may wish. And generally throughout the country the circulation, whether

<sup>1</sup> As also at the libraries of Oporto and Coimbra. At Lisbon there is a Director with ten Assistants. The Government recently proposed that the Director should receive 900 *milreis* (under £200) a year, the six first-class Assistants 800, and the four second-class Assistants 450. At Evora the head librarian is to receive 200 *milreis* a year and his Assistant 150. Thus it appears that the custom of underpaying librarians is not confined to England.

of ideas or of trade and commerce, is less fettered than in Spain, or impeded by indolence rather than by active obstacles.

Yet Portugal is not a country in which it is pleasant to be in a hurry ; small as it is, with a population smaller than that of London, a day, and more than a day, is often required to go from one end to the other of a province, and Faro is over twelve hours' journey from Lisbon by the fastest train. But it is folly for a traveller in Portugal to hurry ; everywhere the exquisite scenery, the wonderful buildings, the pleasant hills and streams, woods and gardens of this “jardim da Europa á beira-mar plantado” lure him to spend his days in leisurely enjoyment—*preguiçando*.

## CHAPTER III

### THE CHARM OF ALEMTEJO

terras Trastaganas  
Afamadas co'o dom da flava Ceres.—CAMÕES.

(The lands beyond the Tagus, famous for the gift of golden Ceres.)

**A**LEMTEJO is the largest province of Portugal, and the most deserted, lying between the Tagus and the *Serra do Caldeirão*. To a Portuguese it is merely ugly and desolate; to the passing foreigner it is one of the most interesting regions of Portugal, and perhaps not the least beautiful. The shepherds and peasants in their black woollen caps, thick brown sheepskins and *ceifões*<sup>1</sup>; the *carros* with pairs of mules yoked to the carts like oxen; the villages of low houses with long massive chimneys as high as the houses; the wide *charnecas* with *limpas* or clearings here and there; the clumps and woods

<sup>1</sup> The *ceifões* (from *ceifa*, harvest) are universally worn by the peasants throughout Alemtejo, and are even to be seen in the towns, as at Evora. They are of thick brown fleeces worn down the front of the leg, and tied round the leg above and below the knee with leathern straps and bright gold buttons. The plain smaller buttons on one pair of *ceifões* were marked "Lisbon," and the larger ornamented ones "Paris."

of *sobreiros* (cork-trees) and *azinheiras*,<sup>1</sup> the cistus and more cistus, and the infinite variety and wealth of wild flowers—these are but a few of the attractions of Alemtejo.

It is not a land of many fruits, in fact it produces little but corn; it is still called the granary, *celleiro*, of Portugal, although the production is now far less than it was in the time of the Romans. Yet Alemtejo, for all its barrenness, often has a thoroughly Theocritean air, as when to the singing of birds and cooing of doves in the woodland floats up, on a summer afternoon, the perpetual undertone of wild bees among the flowers, and the ground beneath the trees is studded with light-blue irises, and a soft wind sways the branches; Alemtejo then, the dreary Alemtejo, recalls the verses of Diogo Bernardez (1520-1605):—

As douradas maçans no mesmo galho,  
Doces e roxas uvas pela fria  
Colherei para ti, cheas d'orvalho.

(The golden apples on their orchard bough,  
The sweet and reddening grapes at cool of day  
For you I'll gather, fresh and filled with dew.)

or those of Camões, equally idyllic:—

O prado as flores brancas e vermelhas  
Está suavemente presentando,

---

<sup>1</sup> Evergreen oaks—the Spanish *encinas*—under which, in late summer, for some weeks before St. Martin's Day, herds of swine are fattened, being penned at night in “*malhadas*.”

As doces e solícitas abelhas  
Com sussurro agradável vão voando.

(The meadow now of flowers red and white  
Decks itself with fresh carpet, softly fair,  
And the sweet active bees' unceasing flight  
With a deep pleasant murmur fills the air.)

The colours worn by the peasants in the lonely farms are mostly brown and black, colour of earth, but in the villages round Elvas and elsewhere the dress both of men and women is of a brightness to be seen scarcely in any other part of Portugal. The reds and yellows and golds are of extraordinary brilliance, the shawls or kerchiefs all of one simple colour, without a pattern. The women wear long gold earrings, and the men carry umbrellas (*guardachuvas*) of incredible size, faded blue or squashed mulberry colour. A girl with yellow flowing kerchief and red shawl passes on a donkey, a man in pink shirt and scarlet sash walking at the side; but "pink" and "yellow" give but little idea of the vivid brilliance of the colours, and almost as a relief comes a small mule-cart, entirely covered by an umbrella of weather-worn dark-blue. To the village of Borba, up the road between olives, returns at evening, on foot and on donkeys, a procession of men and women coming from their work in the distant fields. The wide black hats (*chapeos desabados*) raised at the brim, like a tray or huge saucer, the *alforjes*<sup>1</sup> and brown-red *bilhas*, the

<sup>1</sup> *Span. alforjas*, saddle-bags.



thin gleaming sickles, the bright reds, greens, blues and yellows make a wonderfully quaint and picturesque sight ; the brilliant colour of the women's dresses give a look of well-being, yet the wages of these women are extremely small, and even in the days of June, after a long week's work from dawn to dusk—some eighty hours—they receive on Saturdays the sum of six shillings (twelve *vintens* a day).

Borba is a quiet white village with some two thousand inhabitants and nine churches. The fame of its wine extends at least as far as Villa Viçosa, where "*bom vinho de Borba*" is for sale. The *Largo da Matriz*, cool under acacias, slopes down to another wide, tree-planted square, or *largo*, with a large *chafariz* (fountain) of yellow stone. The road goes between olives crowded with goldfinches, and through vineyards and a few cornfields to Villa Viçosa, with its large barracks and many yellow-washed houses and wide *Praça da Republica* of white and grey cobbles ; Villa Viçosa where, if the proverb says true, the women do little work—

Villa Viçosa  
Mulher preguiçosa.

The entrances of the vineyards are tall white-washed gateways rising to a point, with a little image of the Virgin in *azulejos* above the gate.

The houses of the villages on the road from Villa Viçosa to Redondo are low and often windowless, the chimneys great broad blocks many feet high, whitewashed as spotlessly as are the walls of the houses. Sometimes all the women of a village wear gold-coloured kerchiefs, red and yellow being apparently banished ; here and there beneath the olives the ground is purple with thistles, or dotted with tall irises of faintest blue. A man passes dressed in light blue with wide black hat driving donkeys laden with large red *bilhas de agua*, earthenware waterjars, selling at two or three *vintens* apiece. A woman passes, a sack of potatoes on her head over a golden kerchief, wearing an orange-brown shawl, blue skirt and scarlet apron, and followed by a small boy carrying *alforjes* over his shoulder, their *encharcas*<sup>1</sup> a bright patchwork of many colours. Often tiny boys wear the huge *desabado* hat and look like giant black mushrooms.

Torrão, on another side of Alemtejo near the border of Extremadura, is a little village of low houses and sharply cobbled streets, with gutters and no pavements at the sides. Along the white six-foot high walls of the houses, at evening, children play, dressed in many colours—chiefly dull greens, reds, blues and browns. Mules and donkeys rattle home over the

<sup>1</sup> Name given to the pockets of the saddle-bags.

cobbles, and here a woman with gold kerchief and dark-brown *bilha*, there a girl in pink, with *bilha* of deep red, comes up the steep cobbled streets from the fountain.

## CHAPTER IV

### CHARNECAS OF ALEMTEJO

Que Alemtejo era enxuto  
D'agua e mui seco de prado.  
Toda a terra foi perdida,  
No campo do Tejo só  
Achava o gado guarida ;  
Ver Alemtejo era um dó !

BERNARDIM RIBEIRO (1482-1552).

(For Alemtejo was parched and dry and all its land was waste ; only in the plains of the Tagus might the herds find shelter ; Alemtejo was a grievous sight.)

**M**ANY of the roads of Alemtejo cut through deliciously scented wildernesses of cistus, without a tree, but with many birds and flowers ; vetch, thick-tufted purple lavender, bugloss, hibiscus, the white, round flower of cistus with its dark red spot on each petal, other similar, but unspotted, cistus flowers (the size of wild roses) of white and yellow and glowing pink, pinks, harebells, campionflowers, foxgloves, tall branched asphodels, and a hundred more. The road from Elvas to Borba already passes through tracts of the dark glistening leaves of cistus,<sup>1</sup> and the wind blows its strong, heavy scent of escalonia across the road and over little *limpas* of corn, so that it would seem as if the bread must be all scented

<sup>1</sup> *Cistus ladaniferus*.

with cistus. Or the road is bordered by tall eucalyptus trees, and the hanging bark makes a weird flapping against their bare trunks; or on one side lie tracts of corn without hedge or division, while on the other are wide meadow-valleys, or, rather, sloping wasteland, entirely covered with thistles in flower. The faint purple of their small flowers thus seen in an endless mass is one of the most beautiful sights in Alemtejo, and, indeed, in Portugal; for they cover the slopes and, continuing without a break beneath a distant wood of *azinheiras* (beyond which is a line of clear, blue mountains), make the ground between the trees a sea of faintest purple.

And around Redondo are more *charnecas*,<sup>1</sup> and the *Serra do Osso* is a soft dull red and brown and green.<sup>2</sup> So from Beja to Ferreira do Alemtejo and on to Alcacer do Sal the road passes high between wide moors of rocks and cistus and other shrubs. Some of the shrub-covered hills have a small windmill on the top for grinding corn, but tracts of corn are comparatively few, and the *charnecas* stretch cistus-scented, dull or shrill yellow-green and brown and grey (a deep brown where the *matto*

<sup>1</sup> The word *charneca* is peculiar to Alemtejo and means a wide uncultivated tract of *matto*, or brushwood (chiefly cistus) which the peasants cut for firing. It occurs as early as the XVth Century (in *O Leal Conselheiro*, c. 1430).

<sup>2</sup> Borrow's *Serra Dorso*, "the most beautiful mountain in the Alemtejo."



has been cut for fuel), to faint blue distances. A few *azinheiras* are the only things outstanding in the desolate undulating country, without a single hut or house for many miles. Constantly beautiful are the views on either side; cistus and whin and thick-flowering myrtle invade the road, and shrub-covered ravines lie below it to right and left. Presently tufts of pine and some thick pinewoods in a sandy soil covered with flowers, blue and yellow and glowing pink, tell that Alemtejo is merging into Extremadura.

But especially to walk from Evora across country to Vianna do Alemtejo in summer gives a good idea of the wealth of flowers and of the desolation and subtle charm of the *charnecas* of Alemtejo. Some *kilomètres* from Evora a few rocks and *azinheiras* border the ill-defined path that grows ever more indefinite, now skirting corkwoods, now losing itself in a thick treeless waste of flowers and long grass. The country all around is white, pink and yellow, blue and purple with flowers. Sometimes it is all a thick carpet of lavender of deepest purple, tracts of purple stretching away to brown and on to faint blue lines of low hills. Or wide spaces are entirely yellow with crowfoot, whin and many hawksweeds and daisies, or a faint purple with thistles, or blue with scabious and cornflowers and harebells. And magnificent zones of bugloss mark the apparently endless unbroken plain with a

deep blue-purple. Flowers less massed and continuous than these sometimes combine to strew the ground beneath a wood of tufted pines with a variety of white and yellow, pink and blue.

Elsewhere the sky of clearest turquoise, with snow-white clouds, appears through the branches of a corkwood, beneath which grow asphodels five and six and seven feet high. The cuckoo is a wandering voice turning the air mysteriously to a faint music, doves coo softly in the soft dreaminess of an Alemtejan afternoon, beetles drone heavily beneath the trees, and overhead fly storks so high in air that they seem to be smaller than sea-gulls, or sweep lazily nearer the earth.

Or in a bronzen sunrise across the plain there is no sound but the tinkling of bells, *tintin sonando con si dolce nota*, as the brown long-horned cattle graze in the dew-drenched grass—

O gado pace

Entre as humidas hervas socegado.

Later, in the full burning light of the sun, comes the perpetual undertone of small invisible bees,<sup>1</sup> crickets chirp, the bells of a huge distant flock of brown sheep or of cattle sound intermittently, and, hidden in the grass, or, rather, hidden in flowers, “small fowles maken melodye.” And this is desolate Alemtejo,<sup>2</sup> which Portuguese friends

<sup>1</sup> Thousands of *arrobas* of honey are sent every year from Alemtejo.

<sup>2</sup> The poet Guerra Junqueiro uses the metaphor “*pelas charnecas*”

will bid you leave unvisited. Certainly it is desolate, often far and near no house is to be seen, scarcely a sign of human life. It is but very occasionally that one comes to a farm, great groups of low buildings and long cattle-sheds, often with a peacock or a stork perched on the wall; the farmer, short and full-bearded, in brown sheepskin and black woollen *gorro*, stands before the door smoking a small wooden pipe, *cachimbo*. Or rows of thirty men and more are seen reaping a wide interval of corn without hedge or fence; or a peasant's pointed *gorro* and heavy sheepskin appear above the deep sides of his mule-cart<sup>1</sup> as he drives slowly along one of the many paths of the *charneca*.

Vianna do Alemtejo is a village lying along a high hill of corktrees and *azinheiras*, and its white houses from a distance look like a fading streak of snow on the hill side. A path under *azinheiras* leads towards it bordered by cool mallows, campanulas, chicory and the glowing pink flower of *cistus*. Three or four *kilomètres* of shadeless road separate the village from its railway station. An old man creeps in the sun,

*do tedio*—through the *charnecas* of Ennui," as though Alemtejo were a land of grey monotony.

<sup>1</sup> These carts are lighter, but the ordinary two-mule *carro* of Alemtejo is a slow, heavy waggon. The mules pull like oxen, with the same movement of the hind legs, being yoked, not harnessed. The jolting, even on a smooth road, is terrible, but the sturdy thick-bearded peasants sit placidly in front or stand against the poles that run along the sides.

driving his goats by hurling his crooked stick now to the one side of them, now to the other. Beautiful huge green lizards rustle by the side of the road, the only things that seem to enjoy the cruel sunshine, and a *cantãoeiro* is at work, his red *bilha* set in a bush of whin, the only shelter, in the vain hope of keeping the water cool. At a tiny *venda* near the station a little woman, with coarse wrinkled face and a man's felt hat over her grey dishevelled hair and long gold earrings, is busy behind her counter dealing out *copas* of red wine or brandy or *cigarros* and *charutos* to peasants and farmers; or, her arms resting leisurely on the counter and chin on hands, with many a grim chuckle retails the gossip of the newspapers to her clients. Here is the beginning of 'civilization'; a few miles away in scent of flowers and song of birds stretches the 'dreary' wasteland, the uncivilized plains and desolate open spaces of Alemtejo.

## CHAPTER V

### AN EARLY MORNING DRIVE

Findara a orgia. Pela azul da esphera  
Vae sorrindo ás montanhas pensativas  
O esplendido luar da primavera.

—GUERRA JUNQUEIRO.

(The revel now was o'er. Through azure sky  
With smiles upon the dreaming mountain-tops  
The clear moonlight of Spring fell splendidly.)

THE wind blows heavily scented with  
cistus across the road that leads from  
Villa Viçosa to Redondo and across  
fields and moors thickly overgrown  
with flowers white and yellow, pink and blue  
and purple. In the cloudless summer evenings  
the sky fades from its turquoise to soft grey, a  
clear light green lingering along the West.  
Redondo is a little village of low houses among  
olive-trees. Two 'nocturnal guards' patrol its  
streets wearing long cloaks; they carry pistols,  
and the horns slung over their shoulder give  
them the appearance of herdsmen. On these  
horns they tell the hours. Midnight for them is  
a comically arduous matter, whereas they can  
blow one o'clock with dignity and ease. Many  
villages in Portugal have no night-watchmen,  
and Redondo is not really large enough to need



them; but they take their duties very seriously and perform various small services, such as awakening those of the inhabitants who wish to go early about their work.

The guards had scarcely blown the hour of two upon their horns when the *carro de correio* (post-car) drew up with jingling bells at the post-office. From further down the long village street came a sound of minstrelsy. For they had been celebrating the day of Saint Anthony of Padua, a Portuguese by birth, and in a tiny cornershop, looking on to a little moonlit *praça* of trees, eight or nine of the most persistent still lingered round the poet and musician of the village. Handsome and intensely pale, with long hair and tired sunken eyes, the poet, clearly, was considered a deeply romantic figure in his great-coat lined with fur, open to display his patched trousers of blue cloth. He drew the bow slowly across the strings of his violin as he drank alternately cold water and hot black coffee. They were all listless and melancholy, sitting on the benches round the shop, the door of which stood wide open, while the little blue-eyed shopkeeper and his wife stood apparently happy and unwearied behind the counter, pouring out coffee at a *vintem* the cup. One of the company was a soldier, another had a viola, another a flute; the only drinks of these revellers in music and words and *saudade* were coffee and water.

A few minutes after the watchmen had blown two o'clock the poet rose: "*Pois, senhores, já são as duas horas*—Well, gentlemen, it has struck two"; but before he reached the door into the clear moonlight he was intercepted by eager hands imploring him for one more tune. So the violin came again languidly from its case and the melancholy strains of the *Portuguesa* sounded through the village, played on the violin to the accompaniment of the viola.

But the *carro de correio* for Evora, a light carriage drawn by two mules, drove up and Saint Anthony's devotees were left to their last mournful orgies of music and moonlight and excellent black coffee. At three o'clock the *carro* stopped at a farm to receive a basket of oranges. It was a cool scented morning of June and, although the moon still shone brightly, the Eastern sky, seen through dark *azinheiras*, already had the brown-red colour of earthenware *bilhas*, as if the earth had tinged it, fringing off to orange, gold and grey. The magnificent eucalyptus trees along the road were outlined against the sky, not a leaf stirring, like immense ostrich plumes or trees painted by Watteau. The low line of the *Serra do Osso* was a clear blue, and only a slight ground mist lay across the flowery waste spaces and grey meadows. On a hill surrounded by valleys of *azinheiras* a tall peasant, with thin white hook-nosed face, stood waiting

patient and motionless with a letter for the *caixa* that hangs at the side of the *carro*. His cloak, like the driver's, was of manufactured wool, the colour of sackcloth, and reaching to the feet; huge *tamancos* (*sabots*) and a long black woollen *gorro* being the only other parts of his dress visible. A few minutes after this silent peasant had disappeared between the hedges of a narrow path a mist swept everything from view, sudden as the mists that hide Gibraltar from Algeciras still in sunshine, and of a passing steamer leave but a black line of trailed smoke. The eucalyptus trees bordering the road could now be seen very faintly, grey against grey; carts and donkeys and men going to their work appeared for a moment from the mist, and hidden men could be heard cutting grass in the fields.

The little village of São Migoel de Machende was still at half-past four o'clock half hidden in mist on its hill. It has a little *praça* with small church and tiny *loja do povo*, whose superscription declares that it is licensed (*habilitado*) to sell *tabacos* (as is nearly every shop in Portugal) *fazendas, mercearias e diferentes artigos*. Equally low and small are the shops of wine and bread, *vinhos, padarias*, and the principal street is of windowless whitewashed houses, the roofs often not over seven feet from the ground, with an additional seven feet of chimney. Men dressed

in fleeces of different browns sewn together (*surrão, surrões*), and carts drawn by brown wide-horned oxen passed in the thinning mist. Through a country of *azinheiras* and whin and asphodels and broom, and then through a treeless expanse of *charnecas* and great tracts of corn, the way lies to Evora; the roadside is sometimes purple with bugloss or has, more thinly sprinkled, great thistles in flower and tall light blue irises. It was seven o'clock before the mist had entirely cleared and the towers of Evora were seen, distinct against a sky of soft light blue, from across a wide plain of corn with lines of trees, not unlike parts of Essex.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE CITY OF EVORA

A grande dôr das cousas que passaram.—CAMÕES.  
(Great sorrow for the things that were.)

Il rimembrar delle passate cose.—LEOPARDI.  
(Remembrance of past things.)

EVORA, entered by the steep *Rua de Machende*, straightway establishes a claim to be considered one of the most quaint and characteristic towns of Portugal.<sup>1</sup> Little cobbled *travessas* go off to right and left of the street, with curious ancient names: *Rua da Cozinha de Sua Alteza*, the Street of His Highness' Kitchen; *Travessa das Gatas*, the Passage of Cats; *Travessa do Diabinho*, the Passage of the Little Devil, etc.

The interior of the twelfth-century Cathedral is very light and has, superficially, a recent look, owing to the lines of whitewashed mortar at regular intervals. The capitals of its pillars are

<sup>1</sup> Nor does its beauty and interest end with the walls of the town. A few leagues away is the convent of Valverde, and Montemoro, of which Borrow wrote some of his most characteristic pages. Nearer Evora the sedge-choked tributaries of the Guadiana have an air of Oxford backwaters, and the country immediately below the walls is green and peaceful. At the little white railway station nothing seems to happen, although an *employé* blows a horn from time to time.



simple but are worth long study owing to their beautifully sculptured leaves and doves, etc., the bunches of grapes and vineleaves being especially beautiful. To the right a locked door leads to the fair-pillared cloister round a neglected garden of lemons and gold-fruited medlar-trees and cactus, growing at random, the door from the cloister into the garden being also locked. A winding staircase of worn granite goes up to the tower of the Cathedral. Clothes hang drying and vegetables are being washed on the long roof of the aisle. The view is wide and beautiful, of white Evora below and of the brown plain stretching away to a blue-purple distance.

Close to the Cathedral in the same *praça* is a ruined Roman temple of a ten centuries earlier date; "god by god goes out discrowned and disanointed." It is popularly called the Temple of Diana, and a street going steeply down along white walls, over which appear the tops of trees, and out to the plain round Evora is called *Rua Occidental de Diana*. The mighty pillars of the ruined temple, to whatever god or goddess it was sacred, are in themselves fit objects of worship, as they stand against the blue sky, supporting huge blocks of granite overgrown with yellow lichen. Twelve pillars remain, supporting fifteen and a half blocks, the blocks being double at the two corners that are left; two more pillars stand decapitated, and of a fifteenth

the base alone remains.<sup>1</sup> Lizards dart along the bases of the pillars and swallows circle in and out of the capitals, while above doves sweep slowly across the cloudless sky.

The principal square of Evora is the long *Praça de Giraldo*,<sup>2</sup> with shops and *cafés* and white arcades and a high *chafariz* of yellow marble from the mouths of which great tin *cantaros* are filled through rods of bamboo. A street of little shops under arcades goes down to the *Igreja de São Francisco*, with its great Manueline front and its "Chapel of bones," of which the grim inscription is :—

Nós ossos que aqui estamos  
Pelos vossos esperamos.

(We bones here wait  
Your bones to greet.)

From the square of cool trees in front of *São Francisco* the layer on layer of the white walls of



<sup>2</sup> Geraldo, or Giraldo, was formerly a very common name in Portugal; the surname Geraldez, or Giraldez, (Fitz Gerald) still exists.

Evora's houses are seen going up to the blue sky; some of the houses have little hanging gardens and iron-balustraded terraces. The best view of the *Sé* is from farther out, near the *Igreja de São Braz* in its narrow garden of hollyhocks, from where it is seen clear above storey over storey of brown roofs.

Evora seems ever to have at hand some cool shady refuge from the sun's heat. The fairest of these retreats is the public garden at the foot of the town, most beautifully kept, not only in rigid plots of begonias and magnificent carnations, but with an ordered disarray of foxgloves, snapdragons, arum lilies, roses, hollyhocks and a great round mass of sweet peas. It surrounds the old *Paços de Dom Manoel*, part of which is now a *Museu da Agricultura*, and ends in a terrace formed by the city walls. The *Paços* in their ruins, however artificial, are of an exquisite beauty, a magic of white marble arches, round or broken, and capitals of slender pillars; steps lead up to a square tower, and all is overgrown with ivy, some of the delicately sculptured capitals of white marble being completely hidden in thickest ivy. Not far away, in the *Largo da Graça*, is the curious and beautiful ruined Church of *Nossa Senhora da Graça*, perhaps more beautiful in detail than as a whole. The front of the Church is very solid and fine with its huge granite pillars. To the right the old convent is

now a *quartel*, with a roof of brown tiles and rough balustrade and a two-storeyed cloister of pillars supporting blocks of granite.

But, indeed, the ancient buildings of Evora are so numerous and so full of interest and beauty that it has even been called the Toledo of Portugal. In general effect, in its softness of outline in spite of the intense light, its open spaces, little shaded gardens, cool *praças* and clean-swept *travessas*, and in its quiet and industrious life, Evora is totally unlike Toledo, with which it has in common crumbling walls and ancient ruins and steep, narrow streets. The houses are of a whiteness immaculate yet not glaring, with just sufficient pink or blue or yellow to make a relief; or they are built massively of granite, with green shutters; the shops are mostly tiny.

In a summer sunset the plain round Evora is all a glory of brown and purple, with a few groups of snow-white farms, *montes* and *eredades*, and low lines of blue hills on the red-brown horizon. In the town swallows circle across the light green of the sky and houses of brown-tiled, yellow-lichened roofs glow a soft white. A scarcely perceptible wind moves in the little green squares of trees, and gardens hemmed in by houses. From the *Sé* the bells ring out over the city and to the fields beyond in their call to evening *Oração*, and a deep silence follows,

broken only by voices of children and the twittering of sparrows,<sup>1</sup> and a peace falls upon roof and tower, upon buildings three and four and eight and eighteen centuries old. After sunset the whitewashed walls and arches and pillars, towers and turrets, domes and chimneys, stand out the more clearly, like sails of fishing-boats in a Mediterranean afterglow, while darkly above the city the Roman temple looks across to the pastures and cornlands and *charnecas* of Alemtejo.

<sup>1</sup> Guerra Junqueiro has a line "Gay as June troops of sparrows —Alegres como em Junho os bandos dos pardaes."

The Portuguese word for sparrow is *pardal*—the little brown (*pardo*) bird of St. Francis.



## CHAPTER VII

### THE CITY OF BEJA

Recuérdate, Portugal,  
Cuanto Dios te tiene <sup>1</sup> honrado,  
Dióte las tierras del sol  
Por comercio á tu mandado,  
Los jardines de la tierra  
Tienes <sup>1</sup> bien señoreado,  
Los pomares de Oriente  
Te dan su frutopreciado,  
Sus paraísos terrenales  
Cerraste con tu candado,  
Loa al que te dió la llave  
De lo mejor qué ha criado,  
Tódalas islas inotas  
Á ti solo ha revelado.

—GIL VICENTE, *Triunpho do Inverno*.

(Remember, Portugal, how God has honoured thee, how He gave thee the lands of the sun to traffic with at will. The gardens of the Earth are in thy hand, the orchards of the East yield thee their noble fruit, and its earthly paradises thou hast walled in for thy use. Praise Him who gave thee the key of the best of His creation, and all the unknown isles to thee only has revealed.)

**P**ERHAPS the best advice to those about to go to Beja, the second city of Alemtejo, is Don't. From far across the plain it looks beautiful, a mass of grey and white with only one outstanding tower, the fine old *Torre de Menagem*. And the town is

<sup>1</sup> Here the Portuguese pierces through the poet's Spanish.

picturesque enough in its crumbling walls overgrown with plants, fig-trees and aloes, and its narrow and roughly-cobbled steep *ruas* and *travessas* up which girls in bright red carry graceful dark-brown *bilhas* and donkeys go laden with panniers of water jars, as at Toledo, or drawing carts with holes for two dozen jars. The *Torre de Menagem* is magnificent; the *Igreja da Conceição* has beautiful details of carved capitals, each of different design. But after Evora Beja fails to charm. There are few trees to give shelter from its terrible summer heat. It has a much greyer and browner look than Evora, with scarcely any of its houses cleanly whitewashed; the walls show greyly through the wash and everywhere is dinginess and squalor and apparent neglect. The best hôtel is but carelessly managed, being not only primitive but sordid. A hot wind sweeps clouds of dust up the streets, in which are heaps of dirt and paper and refuse on every side, with dogs and cats and children in the midst. The little shops are black with flies, and flies cover the faces of neglected babies. The houses in the poorer streets, such as the *Rua das Ferrarias*, are of extreme misery, food and fuel, children and rubbish mingling in a close proximity to the rubbish of the street.

The very thought that anyone should sweep

these streets on a summer's day is cruelty, but perhaps the task might be accomplished in the cooler hours of early dawn. Meanwhile the dirt of the streets invades the principal or only room of the poorer houses, which in turn hurl fresh rubbish into the street ; children in rags or no rags play in the dust and refuse ; the whining *ladainha* of beggars, all dirt and tatters, is heard in the streets ; and the effect produced by the town in summer is that it is being baked in rubbish. It is better to admire the picturesque water-carriers of Beja than to drink the water ; and no fruit is to be had, there are not even any fruit-shops in existence. And it is not very easy to leave the city of Beja, since, although it is on the main line, the only line from Lisbon to Algarve, the trains run but at wide intervals ; the waiting-room and *restaurant* of the station are kept closed for hour after hour between the trains, and no newspapers are sold.

But if Beja, picturesque but unattractive, sends the visitor headlong to its railway-station, the plain surrounding it is beautiful. At sunset it stretches away brown to the glowing sky, and, about the time of the ringing of the evening angelus, when the purple has faded from the horizon and only the last gold of a cloudless sunset remains, the towers of Beja stand out clearly on a sky of faintest green, swallows circle round the yellow-lichened *Torre de Menagem*, and the

sails of the windmills<sup>1</sup> turn swiftly in the evening wind. Then the town, which seemed sufficiently full by day, receives a procession of labourers from the plain, sunburnt sicklemen wearily climbing the hill at the end of their homeward tramp; and goats, sheep and a few cows are driven in.

<sup>1</sup> These little mill-towers, round and white, with their pointed roofs of tiles or thatch and their swivel-shaped arrangement of four sails, are very frequent, perched on the tops of hills, especially in Alemtejo and Extremadura.

## CHAPTER VIII

### IN ALGARVE

No horisonte não se veem senão os topos pardo-azulados das serras do Algarve.—HERCULANO, *Lendas e Narrativas*.

(On the horizon nothing is to be seen but the brown-blue hill-tops of the *serras* of Algarve.)

Jardim da Europa, á beira-mar plantado,  
De loiros e de acacias olorosas,  
De fontes e de arroios serpeado,  
Rasgado por torrentes alterosas ;  
Onde num cerro erguido e requeimado  
Se casam em festões jasmins e rosas ;  
Balsa virente de eternal magia  
Onde as aves gorgeiam noite e dia.

—THOMAS RIBEIRO (1831–1901), *A Portugal*.

(Garden of Europe, planted by the sea,  
With, amid springs and streams' meandering flow,  
The scent of laurel and acacia-tree,  
And rush of mountain-torrents dashed below,  
Jessamine and roses inextricably  
High in thy sun-kissed hills at random grow ;  
Fountain of magic ever freshly springing,  
Where still in night- and day-time birds are singing.)

**A** POPULAR *cantiga* says that—  
O Algarve é pae do figo,  
and, in fact, the *terra dos Algarves*,  
as Camões calls it, is the land of the  
fig and the carob, *figueiras* and *alfarrobeiras*.  
Miles on miles of fig-trees<sup>1</sup> may there be seen,

<sup>1</sup> An old chronicle relates that certain Portuguese knights being treacherously attacked by the Moors as they were hunting in



in this land of large holdings, trailing over the ground or arranged in orderly rows. One estate alone can produce 12,000 *arrobas* of figs in a year.<sup>1</sup> The soil is the red colour of *bilhas*,<sup>2</sup> with hedges of aloes (*pitás*), their tall flowers scarcely to be distinguished at some distance from telegraph posts ; which, however unpoetical, is a true likeness, a line of aloe-flowers, as seen near Portimão or near Beja in Alemtejo, growing at regular intervals and all of a height. Fruit-trees are everywhere : medlars (*nesperos*), pomegranates (*romanzeiras*), peach-trees (*pecegueiros*), almonds (*amendoeiras*), olives (*oliveiras*), and especially figs and carobs, with intervals of palm and corn and vine,<sup>3</sup> and stretches of grey-blue rock, and whole pinewoods or tall single pines. The hills, sometimes topped by windmills, are dotted with white houses and little villages straggling among fruit-trees ; all the houses are whitewashed, and have strange tiny round whitewashed chimneys like tips of aloe-flowers.

Algarve, or the Algarves, has always been a region apart. The Kings of Portugal were styled ‘Kings of Portugal and of the Algarves’ ; and the Moors have left the trace of their long

Algarve “quickly built themselves a shelter with branches of fig-trees.”

<sup>1</sup> Selling at about a *milreis* the *arroba*. The *arroba* is 25 lb.

<sup>2</sup> Those seen so frequently farther north ; at Faro the water is often carried in large two-handled pails.

<sup>3</sup> The *Perola* grape of Algarve is celebrated.

predominance in the very name of the province as well as in the names Alfaro, Tunes, etc. The *algarvios*, talkative, pleasant, gay, with something of the fascination of the *andaluz* character,<sup>1</sup> are less reserved and more sceptical than the inhabitants of the northern provinces. "They live careless, after the manner of the Zidonians, quiet and secure."

The capital, Faro, Alfaro, or Santa Maria de Faro, captured from the Moors in 1249, is one of the most delightful towns in Portugal. A long street of faint blue, green, pink, yellow and whitewashed houses faces a little glassily calm inner harbour of the colour of faintest turquoise, the green plants of a steep bank reflected along its edge, with fishing-boats painted red and blue and green, and larger sailing-boats laden or loading with cork. Beyond, across a wide brown stretch of flat land, may be seen sails moving, and little houses as white as the sails. On the other side of the inner harbour lies a *praça* of palms and magnificently tall hollyhocks, pink and red. Over the whole place is the true smell of the sea, which the Mediterranean never has; yet the palms and flowers grow along the water's edge. To one side is a little crowded market-place of meat, fruit and vegetables. The women

<sup>1</sup> In Algarve knife-quarrels are far rarer than in Andalucia. The indolence of the *algarvio* is perhaps as great as that of the *andaluz*, but it is a more peaceful indolence.

nearly all wear long shawls and small black saucer-shaped hats over their kerchiefs of green or red or black, or of plain gold or of large-flowered patterns on a white ground. At the end of the *praça* is the fishmarket, where all kinds of fish, huge and tiny, and lobsters and oysters and cockles, crabs and eels are sorted and sold, boats continually coming in laden to the small quay at the side of the beautiful *praça* of flowers and palms.

In early morning cows with their calves are driven along the narrow streets on all sides: the milk is dear, but one old man who earns a *milreis* a day from the milk he sells in his morning rounds said plaintively that his cow costs him six *tostões* a day to keep, so that it only brings him a clear *cruzado* daily.

Early in the morning, too, at half-past five in summer, takes place the distribution of the "Bishop's alms—a *esmola do Bispo*." Narrow streets lead up to the *praça* in which is the tiny ancient Cathedral, all whitewashed except in its magnificent low square tower, with an entrance-arch of exquisitely sculptured capitals. Opposite the *Sé* across the *praça* is the Bishop's 'palace,' a long low whitewashed building, and here at the door, above the wide flight of steps, a priest on Saturdays distributes alms on behalf of the Bishop of the Algarves. At least two hundred men and women were assembled, not

only the old, halt, blind and feeble, but a considerable smattering of the young and able-bodied, eager to receive the weekly dole, *dez réis* for each, the alms being given indiscriminately. It would be much more difficult to distribute food and clothing according to individual needs; it is far simpler and more picturesque to give a halfpenny to all who come, the Roman Church showing here as ever its keen eye for a dramatic effect. The scene was indeed worthy of Murillo's brush—the pale-faced priest in black, and, below, the flight of steps covered from top to bottom with women in long shawls of dull greens and browns and purples, orange, red or blue, and with men in grey or brown carrying every imaginable shape of crutch and crooked staff. The scene—long may it continue—is perhaps less worthy of the twentieth century, and the *praça's* latest name, *Praça de Candido dos Reis*, posted up all new and shining a few yards away, adds a delightful note of irony. The recipients of the *dez réis* went off in all directions to beg from door to door; it was evident that this was for them the beginning of a crowded day, and many of them walked away smartly with a business-like air.

Below, the town's life was becoming ever more active, long wooden trays of loaves were carried into the covered market, the *cafés* were beginning to open, and carts of single oxen



brought water in great barrels for the flowers of the *Praça* by the sea. The houses of Faro are mostly low with flat roofs or roofs of tiles, some of the flat roofs being bordered with vines and carnations. Mule-carts and innumerable donkeys (every peasant in Algarve having his donkey) pass along the market, and bright colours mingle with grey and brown and rags.

Faro has a cool wind from the sea, but the dusty road that goes to Villanova de Portimão passes in breathless heat along glaring white walls and houses. Fortunately there is also a railway, the one railway of the South of Portugal, coming down from Beja and branching East and West along the coast. In the train a placid little merchant was confessing his political opinions:—

“I say and have always said that it is necessary *trabalhar para a salvação da patria.*”

“How do you propose to ‘work for the salvation of the country’?”

“Well, the country is in a bad way; and—it is necessary *trabalhar para a salvação da patria.*”

As he referred to “*meus correligionarios*” there are, no doubt, others who share his creed. Portimão is one of Algarve’s pleasant towns and fishing-villages along the coast, such as Lagos, Olhão, Albufeira, Villa Real de Santo Antonio. A swift *carrinha*<sup>1</sup> goes in under half an hour

<sup>1</sup> The *carrinha*, or rather its name, is peculiar to Algarve, as



from the station through Portimão to the little hôtel on the shore, called the *praia da Rocha*. It is a low pink-washed building very primitive, but very clean and Portuguese. Thus there is no bathroom, but huge *bilhas* of hot and cold water are carried up for a bath; there are no bells, and to summon a servant the hands are clapped, that custom of so many centuries still prevalent in Spain and Portugal. The sea comes up nearly to the door over a beautiful sandy shore with great rocks, and the only sound at night is that of the faint crystal crash of waves; at day from the windows the sea, light-blue, and the sails of fishing-boats seem to be on a higher level than the house. Villanova de Portimão itself is on an inlet arm of sea, a little white town with white Ferragudo opposite.

But it is not the coast only of Algarve that is a delight. The village of Monchique, high in the *Serra do Monchique*, is famous for the beauty of its surrounding woods and hills. São Marcos da Serra, separated from Monchique by the *Serra do Monchique*, and from the village of Santa Clara a Velha by the *Serra do Caldeirão*, is a little white and brown village on a hill burnt in a perpetual *soalheira*,<sup>1</sup> although

the *carro* is to Alemtejo and the *galera* to Extremadura. The *carrinha* is a light carriage of single horse or mule, or, more humbly, a cart with a plank seat in front and two chairs set against it at the back.

<sup>1</sup> "Sun-bath." A *mulher de soalheira* is a woman who in

on one side is a valley of cool green meadows, and a stream (the Odelousa), half-choked with water-lilies. Between São Marcos da Serra and Monchique are range upon range of many-folding hills, brown and dull-green and grey, all scented with cistus, the soil a purple-brown with views of more distant blue hills beyond, and little brown houses or huts. Tall sad-faced peasants of the *serra* come down in summer to reap in the valleys, their long thin sickles slung round them and wrapped in cloth. Sundays and week-days the work goes on in the fields, but in a summer midday the workers are seen stretched full length everywhere in the deep shade of fruit trees.

Many of the houses are low and miserable, but scrupulously whitewashed sheds of only two rooms, one containing a table, a bed, a few graceful one-handled *bilhas*<sup>1</sup> and small chairs set all round the walls; the other a shed for the donkey which here, as in Andalucia, is almost considered one of the family. Children, naked and baked by the sun, sprawl in the doorway. In summer flowering hollyhocks stand sometimes

winter loves to sit in the sun and so means a gossip, one who combines *bisbilhotice* (curiosity) and *mixeriquice* (love of gossip), and sits in the sun talking with her neighbours. So a *janelleira* is a window-woman, one who leaves her work to gaze out of window. In Spanish, similarly, while *ventanero* means a glazier, *ventanera* means an idle gazer.

<sup>1</sup> Manufactured at Loulé, the smaller and not least beautiful costing sometimes as little as ten réis.

as high as the house, or a stream's dry stony bed is bordered on either side by a thick hedge of myrtle in snowy flower ; the wretchedness of the houses contrasting with the loveliness of their surroundings

## CHAPTER IX

### EXTREMADURA

Oh famoso Portugal,  
Conhece teu bem profundo.—GIL VICENTE.

(O renowned Portugal, realize thy noble worth.)

THE *charnecas* of Alemtejo are prolonged into the province of Extremadura, where, however, they soon make way for corkwoods and pinewoods and olives. The charcoal-burners, *carvoeiros*, of the more remote parts of Extremadura have been described in the *Revista Lusitana*. They live in huts of branches of trees and brushwood called *malhadas*.<sup>1</sup> They have a chief, called *moural*, and a cook, called *migueiro*, from *migas*, bread crumbs, or bread boiled in the *tijela* over the fire, which, with *sardinhas* and *bacalhao*, is their chief food. They are divided into *companheiros*, *sobrenoveis* and *noveis*,<sup>3</sup> and are said even to have

<sup>1</sup> The same name is given to the enclosures in which the pigs are penned in early autumn beneath the *azinheiras* of Alemtejo. The word *malhada* is really equivalent to the Spanish *mazada*, a blow with a mallet.

<sup>2</sup> This word has nothing to do with Moors, or even with 'mourejar', being merely the Spanish *mayoral*. In Alemtejo the head shepherd is called *moiral*.

<sup>3</sup> The *novel* (cf. the 'freshman' of English and the *nuevo* of Spanish Universities) is among the charcoal burners practically a slave, the *sobrenovel*, 'super-freshman,' being a little better off.

their own language or *calão* (slang). Near Alcacer do Sal one may see sailing-boats loading charcoal on the Sado and thousands of sacks waiting piled near the bank.

Many miles from Alcacer the beautiful backwaters of the Sado are half-hidden in willow<sup>1</sup> and poplar and hedges of wild vine, and are covered with white and a few yellow waterlilies. Chicory, pink convolvulus and large blue thistles flower there, snakes slip away from the road into the long grass, and nightingales sing in the depths of green.

The road is deserted and in seventy miles has but one *venda*, called Casa Branca, and this is a shed containing a shop from which a curtained doorway leads to a small whitewashed kitchen with wide *lareira*. The shop has shelves along the partition wall, completely covering it; a great miscellany of articles is for sale—cloth, wool, tobacco, bottles, hats, etc., and from the beams of the tiled roof hang many tin pans, cords and leeks and candles. A wooden counter runs the full length of the shed; a few wooden benches, a tiny table, boxes, barrels and large *bilhas* complete the furniture. Swallows nest along the central beam of the roof-ceiling, the smoke of perpetual cigarettes going up to the nests. Two bullet-headed farm-servants sat at the tiny table before a large glass of red wine, a plate of black

<sup>1</sup> *Chorão* (weeper).



and brown olives, a loaf of coarse bread smoking hot from the oven and a large bowl of curdled goat's milk. All this, which cost them nearly a shilling, they were eating together, wine and milk (into which the bread was crumbled), and olives indiscriminately, with keen relish. Their teeth were splendidly white and regular, their eyes, hair, faces and clothes all black and brown as the olives they were eating. The old wrinkled sycorax behind the counter hobbled away to see if any eggs were to be had, and returned presently with half-a-dozen fresh ones, four of which 'starred,' *estrellados*, with the excellent coarse bread and black coffee, provided, at the cost of sixpence, a meal fit for the gods. The inn bills or *contas* of the peasants are often repeated two or three times, with many an *Escute lá*<sup>1</sup> and *Deixeme fallar só*.<sup>2</sup> Thus: "One *pataco* of bread and three *vintens* of wine, one *tostão*, and *dez réis* of olives and——" and then after discussion the addition begins again; "One *pataco* of bread and three *vintens* of wine, one *tostão*. . . ."

Rare are the travellers from Alemtejo to Alcacer and desolate is the road; but occasionally men pass driving donkeys, the panniers gleaming with *sardinhas* which they sell in remote villages, often thirty and forty *kilomètres* from Alcacer,

<sup>1</sup> Listen to me.

<sup>2</sup> Let me speak without interruption.

or a *cantoneiro* is seen cooking his midday meal in a frying-pan over a little fire of sticks. Alcacer do Sal is a picturesque old town with its houses of many tints along the Sado; crescent-shaped barges laden with *bilhas* are rowed slowly by men in pointed *gorros*, and large sailing-boats take in a cargo of pinewood or charcoal or cork. The town lies on the side of a hill of cactus and aloes, on the top of which an old ruinous convent is now inhabited only by storks. Steep, roughly cobbled *ruas* and *calçadas* go down to the street along the river with sharp abrupt angles and quaint old iron street lamps. The little hanging gardens of carnations, the iron balconies of trailing pink and red geraniums, the vine-trellises and whitewashed walls covered with vines, the grass-grown cobbled paths between huge cactus-hedges, the yellow-lichened roofs of brown tiles, and the old crumbling walls, give to Alcacer a charm and fascination, heightened by its direct communication with the sea. Certainly it is a town delightful to look on if it can scarcely be delightful to dwell in, with its pavementless curious streets of very modern names, but full of dirt and rubbish.

There is no railway to Lisbon, but heavy sailing-boats go daily down the river Sado and across its long *ria* to Setubal. They wait upon the tide and have no fixed hours of sailing, sometimes starting long before the dawn;

besides this strange and fascinating way of reaching Lisbon, a *diligencia* leaves Alcacer every morning at seven for the railway station of Poceirão, forty *kilomètres* away, arriving there at eleven. The driver blows his horn, and the pair of mules slowly climbs the steep *Rua do Outeiro* (Hill-Street) out of the town. Tall hedges of cactus, blackberry and wild vine border the road ; then comes a country of pinewoods and mile upon mile of corkwoods, the stripped trunks yellow, brown or deep maroon. The ground beneath pines and corktrees is bright with many flowers, large cistus flowers of white and yellow and glowing pink,<sup>1</sup> magnificent white and blue thistles, tall thin-branched asphodels, rock rose,<sup>2</sup> and many more. A stop is made at Aguas de Moura, a little village of low and windowless houses with blue corners and whitewashed walls ; and at last the mules jingle into Poceirão, where immense stacks of cork lie along the station, and whence the train speeds through a grey-white sandy soil (producing an abundance of corn and wine and oil), past Pinhal Novo (New Pinewood) and Alhos Vedros (Old Leeks), to Barreiro and the Tagus.

The peasants of Extremadura, as those of Alemtejo and Beira Baixa and a little everywhere, wear the curious woollen cap of liberty,

<sup>1</sup> *Cistus helimifolius* and *Cistus lasianthus*.

<sup>2</sup> *Helianthemum vulgare*.

long and pointed and nearly always dark brown or black. It is called as a rule simply *gorro*, but also *barrete* and *carapuça* (the last especially in Alemtejo and Algarve). It costs about one shilling, rarely more than three *tostões*, and, in addition to being a covering for the head, serves as a purse for money or tobacco, the point, if its contents are many, standing up stiffly instead of falling limply at the back or over the forehead. They carry long sticks, ending sometimes in six inches of ornamented brass, and wear short coats (like Eton jackets) often brown and hemmed with black braid, the sleeves having a pattern of braid and buttons.

The women in Extremadura wear flat crown-like hats of black velvet over glowing kerchiefs. The hat with a pressed down ostrich feather, is but about two inches high (the height of the rim) and six inches across, and is both ornamental and useful for supporting loads on the head. The tall *bilhas*, red and brown, are carried on the head lying on their sides, apparently ever just about to roll into the road or street but never actually doing so. The carts (*galeras*) are often drawn by three mules abreast and have high sides of planks; other lighter carts are drawn by two donkeys yoked, not harnessed. Sometimes the ox-carts have wheels of solid wood except for an open half moon on either side of the axle, but often this



crescent is enlarged till little but rim and axle remains.<sup>1</sup>

The *vendas* in remote parts of Extremadura are as quaint as anywhere in Portugal. Large *bilhas* of water and *garrações*<sup>2</sup> of brandy stand on the counter, and on the ground a barrel or huge pigskin of wine, with a few long benches and stools of pinewood. The ceiling is merely the roof inverted, of tiles with blackened beams, the smoke from the great *lareira* going out through a few holes. Sometimes the coarse grey salt is kept in a hollow piece of pinetrunk by the fire, into which the hand is dipped when it is required for cooking. Otherwise salt is scarcely used, and a bottle of fine salt is one of the greatest needs of those who travel in the more out-of-the-way districts. The food of the peasants is mostly potatoes, cabbage and other vegetables, bread of maize or rye, ham, wine, brandy; one may see a whole family of six or seven, each with his piece of bread and little iron fork, dipping into a single pot of brown earthenware containing a mixture of sausages and the fat of ham; or in the hotter weather they eat salads of oil and *pimento*, lettuce, garlic and olives. And these peasants, living in isolated houses or tiny

<sup>1</sup> In the north of Traz-os-Montes the tiny half moon is replaced by a complete circle on either side of the axle and the wheels are sometimes painted red.

<sup>2</sup> Large jars of glass covered with osier.



villages, will offer their house (*a minha casa*) and their food (*é servido*) like Castilians, or spend much trouble and time in preparing a meal for the stranger, scouring the village for coffee or eggs, for which they will charge but a few *vintens*.

## CHAPTER X

### LISBON (i)

What beauties doth Lisboa first unfold !  
Her image floating on that noble tide  
Which poets vainly pave with sands of gold.—BYRON.

¿ Es buena tierra  
Lisboa ?—La mejor de España. . .  
es contar las estrellas  
Querer contar una parte  
Desta ciudad opulenta.—TIRSO DE MOLINA.

(Is Lisbon a fair city ?—The best in Spain. . . It were to count the stars to attempt to tell even a part of this city's wealth.)

Lisboa pouco a pouco surgia com as suas brancas calças, a herva nos seus telhados, indolente e dôce aos meus olhos.—EÇA DE QUEIROZ, *A Relíquia*.

(Lisbon's white walls and grass-grown roofs gradually appeared soft and indolent before my eyes.)

FROM the Tagus Lisbon appears to be great hills of houses with no intervening space of rocks or trees. Many a garden and green avenue lies completely hidden by the many levels and steep hollows of the city. The *Avenida da Liberdade*, for instance, seems to be on low ground, yet to one side of it one may look down upon the tops of trees and by night wonder at the scent from a hidden garden deep below. It is these hidden reserves of pleasant places, the level above

level, the sharp angles and abrupt descents, that delight the stranger. Frequently, when least expecting it, and seemingly engulfed in buildings, he has a surprise glimpse of the Tagus, light-blue, far below, of the mystery of the ships and the magic of the sea.

The yellow and white *carris de ferro*<sup>1</sup> of Lisbon are excellent mountaineers, curving and stopping on slopes so steep that it might seem as if it only remained for them to turn head over heels. That which best gives an idea of Lisbon's steepness is the view of *Graça*, from near the *Rocio*, a precipitous hill of houses, house sheer above house in seven or eight storeys to the trees and old walls of the *Castello*. The houses are pink and grey and white and yellow, many-windowed. When the evening light is on the windows and the sun "lance son dernier adieu" in flame of gold on every pane, while the clear blue sky forms a background to this mass of houses, the effect is most weird and beautiful; as the afterglow dies, white and yellow lights appear here and there along the hill in street and window. Everything in Lisbon, the sky, the air, the colours of the houses, the lamps at night in narrow streets or shining through leaves of trees, is soft and beautiful; only the strident red and green of the Republican flags are hideously aggressive in this peace. The lamps at night in

<sup>1</sup> Electric tramcars.

the *Rocio*, in the *Avenida da Liberdade*, in the *Praça do Commercio* shine softly like those of Mediterranean cities; in summer there is an added softness, but the winter sky, clear and luminous, is not less beautiful, and reappears after rain in a fresher radiance.<sup>1</sup>

The *Rocio* or *Praça de Dom Pedro* (with a statue of King Pedro IV.) is a large parallelogram paved in a waving pattern of black and white cobbles, surrounded by trees under which are seats crowded with idle loiterers and the unemployed. At one end is the theatre inaugurated by Almeida-Garrett, and opposite one wing of the theatre a little square, with the horseshoe arches of the *Estação Central* (the trains themselves being on a higher level). This square leads into the *Avenida da Liberdade*, magnificently broad and long, with its great central avenue, its side streets for the trams, and its wide pavements beneath palms and acacias and the arched shade of elms, and many a little *kiosque* and cool *chafariz*.

From the terrace of the Church of *Nossa Senhora da Graça* there is a splendid view of the city, red-tiled roofs, grey churches and yellow-washed buildings. The church stands on the steep hill-side, and flowers, olives and even little plots of maize grow immediately below it. From

<sup>1</sup> Almeida-Garrett speaks of “uma d’estas brilhantes manhãs de hynverno como as não ha senão em Lisboa—One of those brilliant winter mornings that only Lisbon knows.”—*Viagens na minha terra*.

the church of *Nossa Senhora do Monte* the view is even wider, and from that of *Nossa Senhora da Penha da França*, about 350 feet above the sea, one may look on Lisbon and hills and sea and Cintra's *serra*. It is a little church above a cool *praça* and *chafariz* and high-walled garden with vine and rose trellises, and hanging ivy geraniums and carnations and Madonna lilies flowering along the top of the wall; a welcome sight after the sunny climb along the *Rua da Graça* and the *Estrada da Penha da França*.

Some of the houses of Lisbon are of many storeys and tower above the steep descending street, as in the *Rua de São Francisco*; sometimes they are entirely covered with *azulejos* (glazed tiles), easily washed and looking very bright and clean. The *Rua do Alecrim*<sup>1</sup> (Rosemary Street) is one of the steepest streets of this city of steep streets, going up to the *Praça de Camões* on the left and the *Rua Garrett* on the right. The houses, of great height, appear gigantic from the rapid fall of the street, in which one may see tandems of oxen<sup>2</sup> pulling a load up the hill. From here one may go on and up to

<sup>1</sup> "The most singular street, however, of all is that of the Alemerin or Rosemary, which debouches on the Caesodré. It is very precipitous and is occupied on either side by the palaces of the Portuguese nobility, massive and frowning but grand and picturesque edifices, with here and there a hanging garden overlooking the streets at a great height."—BORROW, *The Bible in Spain*.

<sup>2</sup> The carts of single oxen in Lisbon are many, and some have wheels of solid wood.



the *Mãe d'Agua*, the Mother of Water, past the *Alameda de São Pedro*, with its shady avenue and beautiful view of the greater part of Lisbon, past the *Largo do Principe Real* (now *Praça do Rio de Janeiro*) with its trees and flowers and view of Lisbon no less beautiful, past the Botanical Gardens and the Royal Observatory, to the uneven slanting *Largo do Rato*. Its quaint indigenous name has not been allowed to stand; the Republic, with a disinterested passion for improvement, has altered it to *Largo do Brasil*, and the Brazilians are no doubt flattered to see the name of their country where before was a humble rat. High above Lisbon as is this *largo*, steep streets go out from it to a still higher level. The *Rua das Amoreiras* thus goes up to the *Praça das Amoreiras*, a little square of limes and copper beeches, palms and roses, and to the aqueduct the "Mother of Water," in one of whose arches the little church or chapel of Monserrate lies ensconced.<sup>1</sup>

Another street going up from the *Largo do Rato* is the *Rua do Sol do Rato*, joined to the *Rua das Amoreiras* by the *Rua de São João dos Bem Casados*, St. John of the Well Married. Both these streets have hitherto escaped the ardour of the street-name politician. The *Rua*

<sup>1</sup> At Campolide, a few miles on the way to Cintra, the aqueduct stalks magnificently across the deep valley of Alcantara with tall pointed arches, and little turrets set along it at intervals.

*do Sol do Rato* is especially picturesque, its deep coloured houses of brown, maroon and yellow standing at many levels and angles ; and in early morning many are its cries and chants, of sellers of milk driving their cows slowly up the street ; of sellers of fruit or vegetables or fish, or thyme and other scented plants for firing. A side street, the *Rua do Vizconde Santo Ambrosio*, leads from it to the Church of Saint Elizabeth, *Beatae Elizabeth Lusitaniae Reginae*, and the *Rua de Saraiva Carvalho*, and then the little *Cemiterio dos Ingleses* appears, in a corner of the *Passeio Publico da Estrella*. It is dark and cool, with cypresses and masses of red geranium, six feet high. Here Fielding was buried in 1754, the present tomb and inscriptions being of 1830 : “Henrici Fielding a Somersetensibus apud Glastoniam oriundi, viri summo ingenio, en quae restant, stylo quo non alius unquam intima qui potuit cordia reserare, mores hominum excolendos suscepit, etc., etc.” ; a trailing inscription of many lines, the last of which is already illegible. Another side bears the pathetic words : “Advenit Olyssiponem recuperandae sanitatis causâ, ubi tabe elanguescens revisere dum cuperet natale solum ultimam aspexit lucem. MDCCLIV. aetatis xlvii.” The cemetery is on the outskirts of the city, not far from the *Campo de Ourique* with its fields of corn and little wind-mills.

Perhaps even more than to see the Lisbon churches—the Cathedral and its cloister round a fair garden of climbing plants and scarlet-flowering pomegranates, from the end arch of which is seen a glimpse of the Tagus far below; the beautiful ruined *Carmo*, now serving as an archæological museum; *São Vicente de Fora*, with its sacristy of coloured marble mosaics rich rather than beautiful, and its grim and ghastly pantheon of the Kings of Portugal (including King Carlos and the Crown Prince); *Nossa Senhora da Conceição Velha*, with its Manueline front; more than to see the gardens and avenues—the *Avenida da Liberdade*, the *Alameda de São Pedro de Alcantara*, the Botanical Gardens, the *Tapada das Necessidades*,<sup>1</sup> or the shops and clubs of the *Chiado* (now *Rua Garrett*)—the stranger has a curiosity to see the markets of Lisbon, the fish-market by the Tagus and the market of the *Praça da Figueira*, to which during the night and early morning rumble the *saloios*'<sup>2</sup> carts of vegetables and flowers and fruit of every kind from the outlying gardens and from the rich orchards of Cintra. The market,

<sup>1</sup> The *Tapada*, now kept open, is, both in extent and in the variety of its trees and flowers, of real magnificence and far grander in appearance than the *Palacio das Necessidades* to which it belongs. The *Palacio* is an unpretentious rambling house, of pink and orange wash with white shutters, looking down on to the dingy streets and factory chimneys of the *Doca de Alcantara*.

<sup>2</sup> The name given to the peasants in the neighbourhood of Lisbon.

under a roof of glass and corrugated iron is, indeed, crowded with flowers, among yellow and red and golden mounds of fruit; in the early morning the dense groups of women, often carrying baskets of fruit and vegetables, hens and ducks on their heads, and the massed abundance of many fruits threaten to invade the street, and there is a ceaseless rumour of many voices; but at no hour of the day and at scarcely any hour of the night is the market entirely deserted.

Even more picturesque is the market along the *Caes do Sodré*, a place of huge extent under rough sheds, where women sit on the ground between vegetables heaped in towering pyramids many feet high, without baskets; and here, too, many flowers are sold. Opposite is the fish-market, uncovered, with large white umbrellas above the stalls. The fishwomen (*peixeiras*) of Lisbon are to be seen in every part of the city, in the fashionable streets and *praças*, in the stifling alleys of the *Mouraria* or *Alfama*, toiling barefoot up a precipitous cobbled street, or blocking a pavement with their loads of fish. Their flat baskets, saucer-shaped black hats and large gold earrings, their kerchiefs of black or, more often, of bright gold, yellow, orange or green, flowing down to the waist, their stiffly folding skirts of dull green, mauve or blue, their piercing cries and tired faces render them the most curious sight and sound of the city. Fish are also sold by



men, in white with black *cinta* and *gorro*, carrying a long heavy pole across one shoulder with a basket on either end, but their cries are mellow as are the chants of the vegetable-sellers, who likewise carry two loaded baskets on a heavy pole.<sup>1</sup>

Especially in early morning is the fish-market crowded, although all day the scene there is a busy one ; the fish-sellers have first to buy their fish, and this is no simple process, but entails endless bargaining and standing before the stalls, so that even in the early morning one is scarcely surprised to see a worn, tired look on many of the faces. The women who sell cry the price shrilly in an endless repetition and at incredible speed, like a clock run mad ; till at length they cease exhausted, only to begin again after a short interval. Their words, even at full speed, are perfectly clear and by the sheer importunity of their cry they lure on and paralyze the buyer ; at least that seems to be an explanation of their otherwise quite reedless repetition. The abundance of fish of every kind and colour, shape and size, the white stalls, the many yellows, orange, gold and green and other colours of the women's kerchiefs, their quaint flat black hats and rigid

<sup>1</sup> In summer little shops and stalls of fruit are to be seen everywhere ; donkeys pass loaded with tiny baskets of strawberries ; and little stands are carried about with lemons and glasses and great red *bilhas* of water. Later in the year may be seen donkeys with panniers of olives fresh from the country.



skirts, the black bright-patterned pads worn above hat and kerchiefs, the flat baskets covered with blue and green oilcloths, all combine to form the strangest scene imaginable. The women are all barefoot, but many have huge gold earrings, and gold chains with hanging coins and locketts.

Along the *Caes do Sodré* are little piers with sloping intervals of wall, where women in bright-coloured dresses wash the fish. Fishing-boats with furled sails and brown nets drying from the masts are all along the quay, and in some of them, newly arrived, women wait to fill their baskets, the green, gold and yellow, and dull mauves and blues of their dress showing against the nets. In another boat women may be seen unloading bricks in flat baskets on their heads, and other boats, black and green, sail slowly out with rust-red sails. Near the quay women are at work among a great array of baskets and salt and *sardinhas*; two women sitting in deep baskets, surrounded by salt, face one another and throw the salted sardines into a third basket, in which another woman packs and arranges them. Little stalls of fried sardines, bread and wine and coffee, offer refreshment to those of the workers who can afford the time and money, but in the early morning the work goes on unceasing, one of the most crowded hours of Lisbon's busy life.

## CHAPTER XI

### LISBON (ii)—ALFAMA

With all its ruin and desolation Lisbon is unquestionably the most remarkable city in the Peninsula, and perhaps in the South of Europe.—GEORGE BORROW.

Quem não ve Lisboa não ve cousa boa.—*Portuguese Proverb.*

(Lisbon unseen, great loss, I ween.)

E tu, nobre Lisboa, que no mundo

Facilmente das outras és princeza.—CAMÕES.

(And thou, noble Lisbon, that reignest supreme among the cities of the world.)

IT is small wonder that Lisbon should have interested Borrow, since even now, when the city has lost so many of its quaintnesses, an old street name, a narrow archway, an ancient custom or costume continually disappearing, it has preserved its somewhat baffling and mysterious individuality, often remaining strange and unfamiliar to the visitor, even after a long stay. And by reason of its position on the slopes and summits of several hills above the river it can never bow the knee entirely to progress. Not even the earthquake that, on the 1st of November 1755, came suddenly in a cloudless sky and sank the ships along the *Caes das Columnas*, and mingled churches and houses in a common ruin, could

alter the formation of the hills to which Lisbon owes much of its charm.

In spite of the carefully kept cleanly appearance of the greater part of the city, still—

Within this town  
That sheening far celestial seems to be

there are quarters where the inhabitants are crowded in airless spaces, unkempt, unwashed and reared in dirt. Especially the districts below the *Limoeiro* and above the *Docas da Alfandega* and *Terreiro do Trigo*, districts with Moorish names—*Alfama*, *Mouraria*—are most weird and extraordinary. *Alfama*—the parishes of *São Migoel* and *São Estevão*—is the poorest, dingiest quarter of the city. The streets go steeply down to the Tagus in sharp turnings, precipitous flights of steps and dark arched passages. Some of the streets are not a yard wide, the broader ones are blocked by men lying asleep across them. Women, in bright reds and yellows bargain for fish and vegetables on the ground; men carrying barrels of water call their peculiar low cry; children play on narrow flights of stone steps or disappear into little dark courts.

*Alfama* is a Moorish network of *becos*<sup>1</sup> and *ruas*, *escadinhas*,<sup>2</sup> *travessas*, tiny *largos* and

<sup>1</sup> Narrow streets. In Traz-os-Montes a narrow, dingy passage is called an *alfurja*, elsewhere a *betesga*.

<sup>2</sup> Small flights of steps.

*praças, calçadas, boqueirões*,<sup>1</sup> *calçadinhas*,<sup>2</sup> for the greater part so intricate and tiny that they can be marked on no plan however minute. The hill is precipitously steep, and the streets, eked out by steps and diving under passages, climbing and twisting in search of an outlet to the air, give the impression that they are not streets but irregular cracks opened by an earthquake in a solid mass of houses. The widest, that of São Vicente, gives bare passage to a tram, which winds slowly up the breathless ascent.

In the narrower streets clothes and gay-coloured *mantas* are hung right across from upper windows, further increasing the stifledness below. Here are the *Largo do Outeirinho da Amendoeira* (Square of the Little Hill of the Almond Tree), the *Rua dos Corvos* (Street of Crows), the *Beco das Beguinhas*, the *Beco dos Paus* (Street of Staves); the steep narrow *Escadinhas de São Estevão*, the *Escadinhas do Arco de Dona Rosa*, a flight of steps ascending from the *Largo de Dona Rosa* with a sharp, dark turn and gloomy, murderous archway, the *Beco dos Clerigos*, formed of steps and cobbles. The little *becos* are strewn with dirt and rubbish, cats and naked children; there is, indeed, scarcely

<sup>1</sup> *Boqueirão* = literally "a large mouth," and so a court or passage.

<sup>2</sup> Little paved ways.

room to wield a brush, and they are probably but seldom swept. But here and there are a few vines, and even small hanging gardens and terraces of one or two trees ; or plants of carnations in old tins flower along the tiny iron balconies. Colour is never lacking ; the bright-hued blankets hung across the streets, a single one more than covering the street's width, the marvellously brilliant pinks and reds, gold and orange worn by the women enliven this sordid place, and the houses are washed in bright orange, pink and other hues. Little rooms full of bright trinkets display their contents to the street from the recess of a low dark arch, or children in pink and scarlet play among grey heaps of rubbish. Above stands the great yellow-washed prison, the *Limoeiro*<sup>1</sup> (scene of so many despairs and injustices, where political offenders and common criminals and children have been and still are herded together), as if it were the natural and reasonable outcome of such surroundings.

<sup>1</sup> The poet Almeida-Garrett was imprisoned there in 1823 :

N'esta mansão do crime e da vergonha  
C'os malfeitores vis.

(With low miscreants, in this dwelling of crime and shame.)



## CHAPTER XII

### THE CONVENT AND TOWER OF BELEM

Avanté, avanté Lisboa  
Que por todo o mundo soa  
Tua prospera fortuna.—GIL VICENTE.

(Forward, oh Lisbon, since through all the world  
Thy prosperous fortune sounds.)

Salva, Belem, sentinella  
Solitaria do Rastello,  
Padrão glorioso e bello  
Da nossa idade mais bella.  
D'essas rendadas ameias  
Espreitas as velas cheias  
Dos galeões d'alem-mar ?  
Não, que o teu vulto guerreiro  
Ficou só. Mas o estrangeiro  
Ha-de inclinar-se ao passar !

—JOSÉ DA SILVA MENDES-LEAL (1818-1886).

(Hail, Belem, solitary sentinel of the Rastello, fair and glorious memorial of our fairest age. From thy laced ramparts dost thou look for the full sails of galleys from beyond the sea ? No, for alone thy warrior mien remains. Yet will the passing stranger bow his head in reverence.)

**V**ASCO DA GAMA, after passing the short July night (1497) in the little hermitage of *Nossa Senhora do Rastello*, went with solemn prayer in procession to the Tagus, to embark on that great voyage of discovery which was to make his own name and the name of Portugal famous throughout the centuries.

Camões describes the scene in the *Lusiads* :

A gente da cidade aquelle dia  
 (Uns por amigos, outros por parentes,  
 Outros por ver sómente) concorria,  
 Saudosos na vista e descontentes ;  
 E nós, co'a virtuosa companhia  
 De mil religiosos diligentes,  
 Em procissão solemne a Deus orando  
 Para os bateis viemos caminhando.

(The people of the city on that day (some to take leave of friends or kinsmen, others but to look on) came together, their looks all sad and wistful : and we in the virtuous company of a thousand diligent priests went towards the boats, in solemn procession and with prayer to God.)

Partimonos assim do santo templo  
 Que nas praias do mar está assentado.<sup>1</sup>

(And thus we left the holy temple built upon the shore.)

On the site of the hermitage King Manoel I. had made a vow to build a nobler temple if the expedition were successful, and when Vasco da Gama returned in 1499, "entrando a boca já do Tejo ameno," the first stone of the new building was laid. The style is Manueline, the cloisters and magnificent entrance of the Church of Santa Maria are by João de Castilho. It is curious to call both the austere bare and simple churches of Catalonia and the profusely ornate Manueline buildings of Portugal Gothic ; yet Manueline is a late Gothic, and often, indeed, one longs to strip off some of its laced traceries and surfeit of unnecessary details, so noble and

<sup>1</sup> "Partirão do porto de Bethalem." Damião de Goes, *Chronica do felicissimo Rei Dom Emanuel*.

splendid is its main structure. Happily many of these details have a meaning and purpose—to represent by ropes, chains, spheres and even tropical birds and flowers, Navigation and Vasco da Gama's voyage of discovery. The style bears the name of the King (Manoel I.) in whose reign the great discoveries were made.

The interior of the church of Belem has an air of severe grandeur for all its wealth of ornament. The single pillars, rising to the full height of the building (25 *mètres*) are very splendid, although they are tortured with sculpture: one may be sufficiently ungrateful to reflect that had they been left plain, their effect would have been even more wonderful. Here is that vivid statue of São Jeronymo open-mouthed, of whom King Philip II. of Spain said that he was waiting for it to speak. Here, side by side, are the tombs of Vasco da Gama and Camões in a little chapel with that of King Sebastian, which rests on rude elephants of black marble. And opposite is the coffin of the poet and politician, Vizconde de Almeida-Garrett (1799-1854). In the Cloister rests beneath a splendid tomb his contemporary, Alexandre Herculano, the poet-historian (1810-1877). The Cloister has a rich magnificence of sculpture, stone ropes everywhere twisting up the pillars and around their bases; the Cloister garden, too, represents in stiff-set patterns the

same idea of navigation, and the central plot consists of an immense sphere.

The former convent is now an orphan school with eight hundred orphans and twenty-five masters. Thrice a day they have their meals in the monks' great refeitorio. There are fourteen dormitories, some of them with as many as seventy beds, the rooms very clean and full of air from wide windows all along them. Opposite the convent a garden full of flowers, with tall geranium hedges, reaches to the Tagus. Along an old high yellow-washed wall with coping of pink and purple flowers, and a *quinta* of the Duque de Loulé, and then through dingy streets one comes to the *Torre de Belem*, which has its foundation in the sand and its front terrace in the waters of the Tagus, tiny waves breaking round it. Across the light blue water one may see the steep banks and pinewoods of the opposite shore and to the left, not far from the river's mouth, many ships ride at anchor. Everywhere upon the curious low tower, standing so grey and solitary at the extreme river edge, are coils and knots of rope carved in stone. At its back is a factory chimney and a deposit of coal, so that on this side the tower is all black and grimy; but seaward it maintains its look not of beauty but of proud independence and determination and quaint individuality.

## CHAPTER XIII

### CINTRA

Cintra pendura-se pela montanha entre lençoes d'aguas vivas e respira o cheiro das hervas e flores que crescem á sombra das penedias.—HERCULANO.

(Cintra hangs upon the mountain-side between streams of living water and breathes the scent of herb and flower that grow in the shadow of the crags.)

If there be a place in the world entitled to the appellation of an enchanted region it is surely Cintra.—BORROW.

Lo ! Cintra's glorious Eden intervenes  
In variegated maze of mount and glen.  
Ah me ! what hand can pencil guide, or pen,  
To follow half on which the eye dilates  
Through views more dazzling unto mortal ken  
Than those whereof such things the bard relates  
Who to the awe-struck world unlocked Elysium's gates ?

The horrid crags, by toppling convent crowned,  
The cork-trees hoar that clothe the shaggy steep,  
The mountain moss by scorching skies imbrowned,  
The sunken glen, whose sunless shrubs must weep,  
The tender azure of the unruffled deep,  
The orange tints that gild the greenest bough,  
The torrents that from cliff to valley leap,  
The vine on high, the willow branch below,  
Mixed in one mighty scene with varied beauty glow.

Then slowly climb the many-winding way  
And frequent turn to linger as you go,  
From loftier rocks new loveliness survey  
And rest ye at ' Our Lady's House of Woe.'—BYRON.



POSSIBLY many of those who go to Portugal have a certain prejudice against Cintra, and are even at times inclined to leave it unvisited. They are a little weary of the intervening of its glorious Eden, they have heard it so often praised in verse and prose, the name is so familiar, the beauty recognized by all, it has become like one of those great classics which everyone knows so well but which no one has great curiosity or incentive to read. Perhaps too they expect to find there aggressive modern buildings and sky-scraping hôtels. But Cintra visited instantly dispels these fears, and calmly, haughtily sweeps away disaffection and indifference, justifying the magic of its name. Yet, although it cannot disappoint, but must surprise and enchant all those who go there, it is not a little difficult to write of Cintra, since in the first place it cannot be described, and, secondly, it has been described so often. Cintra itself is a straggling village of pink and red, brown, yellow and green-washed houses around the *Palacio Real* with its curious immense chimneys. The mountain range immediately above it is folded in three heights, forming together a great wing of crags and trees; the central height rises to a sharp peak, with the *Castello da Pena*,<sup>1</sup> the 'toppling convent' between

<sup>1</sup> Really *Penha* 'Rock,' but now universally known as *Pena Woe*, 'Our Lady's House of Woe.'

the pine-covered ridge of the *Cruz alta* and a hill with great boulders and grey Moorish Castle, below which the rock is all yellow with broom or whin in flower. The Serra de Cintra continues in deep-wooded crags gradually sloping to the sea and from the road to Mafra one turns to look back frequently to the loveliness of this whole region.

Between Lisbon and Cintra there are no fewer than thirteen little railway-stations (in twenty-two miles), with crowding gardens of fruit and vegetables, and many a country-house and palace, the Castle of Queluz, the *quinta* of the Condes de Pombeiro at Bellas, the monastery of Dominicans at Bemfica. Olives and corn mingle with vines and gardens, the ripe corn in places blue with chicory and convolvulus. After Cacem the country is wilder, chiefly of green moors studded with yellow and purple flowers and splendid patches of broom.

The village of Cintra is pleasantly surprising in its houses and hôtels mostly unpretentious and embedded in trees. The hôtels, especially, are unassuming, as the old Lawrence's Hôtel, a low and yellow-washed building with an English proprietor and a Galician *mozo*, who will tell you with pride that "Byron and Lipton" have stayed there. A few hideous buildings there are, as a glaring white house of immense size just finished for a Portuguese millionaire, and the new *Paços*

*do Concelho*. But the most obnoxious thing in Cintra now, besides the English everywhere spoken, is not these new buildings, which time will mellow, and which meanwhile will be a dreadful warning to prevent others, but a thing so small that it might escape notice, a sign-board high up on the "many-winding mountain-way" that leads to the *Castello da Pena* bearing the inscription *Avenida de Candido dos Reis*.<sup>1</sup> It is well known that the chief joy, if not the only aim of revolutions in Spain and Portugal is to change the names of street and square in every town and village throughout the country. It is a very harmless way of annoying political opponents, and inspires its authors with a pleasing sense of strength and union; but to post a name up where no name was, and where there is no street or wall or house but only trees and flowers, seems gratuitous and surely shows an excess of zeal. Perhaps, when the first official ardour of candid Republicanism is over, someone will have the good taste to order the removal of this flaunting notice and to chop off the head of the *administrador do concelho* or of whoever was the offender.

The private rooms of the *Palacio Real* at Cintra now serve as a museum. In the *Sala dos Cervos* (Hall of Stags) the stags still support

<sup>1</sup> The name of the admiral who, believing the revolution of October 1910 to have failed, committed suicide.

the arms of the Portuguese nobility ; in the long *Sala dos Cisnes* twenty or thirty swans cover the ceiling, and in the *Sala das Pegas* the ceiling is all of magpies, carrying scrolls in their beaks with the words *Por bem*. The well-known story is that Philippa of Lancaster surprised her husband, King João I., paying court to one of her ladies, and the King to excuse himself said that it was *por bem*, 'for good,' honourably meant. The royal words went mockingly from mouth to mouth of the Court ladies, and the King revenged himself in this painting of many magpies. In the *praça* (now *Praça da Republica*) outside the palace is a pillar said to be part of an ancient fountain<sup>1</sup> to which belongs another legend. For it is said that King João III. was minded that the fountain should flow with milk on a certain day ; each inhabitant of Cintra was to contribute a *bilha* of milk to this intent. But each inhabitant, thinking that one *bilha* of water in so much milk would pass unnoticed, poured in a *bilha* of water, and on the appointed day, when the fountain was set flowing before King and Court assembled, the water gushed out clear crystal as before.

A narrow path leads among the grey crags of the *serra* to the long crenellated walls and towers of the ruinous *Castello dos Mouros*, grey as the rock beneath it. The path winds beneath

<sup>1</sup> The old *pelourinho* was destroyed last century by the *Concelho*,



trees of every kind, with periwinkles and fox-gloves, harebells, wild roses, rhododendrons and bracken, and a mixed scent of moor and sea. Other paths go up to the *Castello da Pena*. The wildness of huge boulders and pines defies attempts to make the hill-side like a well-ordered garden. Chestnuts and oaks, pines, eucalyptus and palms, magnolias and beeches and cedars, camelias and elms, bays and myrtles mingle their Northern gloom and strength with a Southern brilliance of flower and gracefully-waving branches; here and there is an old crumbling well or a small arched building with fallen pillars, and below the Castle, in the beautiful gardens, is the *Fonte das Andorinhas* (Fountain of Swallows), of water icy and transparent, its marble spout, on which four white marble swallows perch to drink, all worn away by the water.

The Castle was originally a hermitage of monks of the Order of São Jeronymo. King Manoel I. had arranged for it to be enlarged, and, as he inspected the work, he is said to have seen the ships of Vasco da Gama entering the Tagus' mouth after their successful voyage of discovery, and so built this palace, which still, for all its magnificence, has a certain homely air. It has no electricity or gas, it has no bath-rooms; the dining-room, with worn carpet, has place for scarcely twenty persons. Gaping peasants now



wander through the private rooms, where photographs of the Crown Prince and King Manoel belonging to Queen Amelia, and arms belonging to King Manoel, still hang on the walls, and the tables are covered with illustrated newspapers, for the most part English, of the week preceding the Revolution. The house has all the air of patiently awaiting its master's return. After the extinction of the Religious Orders in 1838 the *Castello da Pena* was bought by King Ferdinand and on his death by the State. The chapel has an altar of alabaster and white marble beautifully sculptured. The dining-room opens on to a tiny high terrace with magnificent view; but, indeed, the view from every window is magnificent, and from the little six-pillared turret on the top of the cupola, frequently in a fierce driving wind, there is a wide unbroken prospect of the whole country—across the giant statue of Vasco da Gama and the great stone cross, *Cruz alta*, to the beautiful circle of blue bay and white sandy shore<sup>1</sup> at the mouth of the Tagus, faint pieces of Lisbon, and, beyond, the wide moors and hills of Extremadura; and so round to the dark towers of Mafra's convent, and the sea. Immediately below on every side the lovely, darkly-wooded *serra* surrounds the palace, throwing its splendour into insignificance.

The road to Colhares passes through woods

<sup>1</sup> The *branca arêa* of *Lusiads*, iv. 84

and shady gardens with springs and pools and fountains, groves of citron and orange and all kinds of fruits and flowers, past the gardens of *Penha Verde*, a green door beneath an ancient archway, and, about four *kilomètres* from Cintra, the *Quinta de Monserrate*. The owner, Sir Frederick Cook, is also the owner of *Penha Verde*, although the character of the man who planted the gardens of *Penha Verde*, João de Castro, fourth Portuguese Viceroy of India, was very different from that of William Beckford.<sup>1</sup> The wonders of Monserrate's house and gardens (planned and laid out by Beckford) are so often told that one goes expecting to be a little disappointed. But the wild semi-neglect of the place, its art so artfully hidden, immediately takes the fancy prisoner, and the deep lawns below the house only add to the charm of the paths farther away through ivy, foxgloves and wild roses along the steep hill-side. A wild mountain torrent (so secret is the artifice) falls

<sup>1</sup> In that low shady quinta, embowered amongst those tall alcornoques, once dwelt John de Castro, the strange old viceroy of Goa, who pawned the hairs of his dead son's beard to raise money to repair the ruined wall of a fortress threatened by the heathen of Ind; those crumbling stones which stand before the portal, deeply graven, not with "runes," but things equally dark, Sanscrit rhymes from the Vedas, were brought by him from Goa, the most brilliant scene of his glory, before Portugal had become a base kingdom; and down that dingle, on an abrupt rocky promontory, stand the ruined halls of the English Millionaire, who there nursed the wayward fancies of a mind as wild, rich and variegated as the scenes around.—*The Bible in Spain*.

in cataract after cataract from a great cliff of rocks, through giant ferns and scarlet flowers to a dark pool with arum lilies and bamboos, and, there crossed by stepping stones, flows on to the deep ravine below, hidden in shrubs, fuchsias and huge towering rhododendrons. Overhead is a rumour of wind from the sea among the trees, and the sound of the hidden stream below enhances the dreamy enchantment of the place, its magic sense of oblivion and peace. Here Tennyson might have written the heavy sweetness of the lines of the Lotus-eaters:—

Here are cool mosses deep  
And through the moss the ivies creep  
And in the stream the long-leaved flowers weep  
And from the rocky ledge the poppy hangs in sleep.

The incantation thus woven is a clinging magic, and it follows the visitor as he goes down to where, among little wildernesses of hydrangeas and arum lilies here and there, he has glimpses of Cintra's trees and crags, of the sky through branches of tree above tree, or of the woods sloping to the sea; and listens to the cooing of doves and the singing of many birds; and walks through cedarn covers and palms and roses, choosing a path at random from the multitude of leaf-strewn ways; and passes sinister ink-black pools and along spaces white and red and purple with fallen petals.

Cintra is not to be seen in a single day; a

month of quiet sojourn there in summer goes all too swiftly. The woods of the cool *serra*,

o caro Tejo e a fresca serra  
De Cintra (*Lusiads*, v. 3);

the little village of Collares seven *kilomètres* away, with its famous *Ramisco* vines; the *Praia das Maças* (Shore of Apples); the *Cabo da Roca*, western extremity of Portugal; the cork convent where Honorius dwelt "in hope to merit Heaven by making earth a hell"; the many *quintas*; and, far and near, the "Elysian scenery," as "Vathek, England's wealthiest son," or, more prosaically, William Beckford, described it—all lure to spend here not weeks only, but years;

Sentado  
No musgo de tuas rochas escarpadas  
Esparciendo os olhos satisfeitos  
Por ceus por mares por montanhas, prados,  
Por quanto hi ha mais bello no Universo.  
—ALMEIDA-GARRETT, *Camões*, v. xi.

(Seated by mossy crags, with happy eyes  
Gazing on sky and sea, mountain and meadow,  
And all that in the world exists most fair.)

Na serena doçura  
Da maga solidão, n'esta belleza  
Vivamos para nós co'a natureza.<sup>1</sup>

(Here let us live with Nature to ourselves,  
Amid the loveliness, the serene peace  
Of this charmed solitude.)

<sup>1</sup> Lines written at Cintra by Almeida-Garrett in 1822.

## CHAPTER XIV

### MAFRA, ALCobaça, ALJUBARROTA, BATALHA

Yet Mafra shall one moment claim delay,  
Where dwelt of yore the Lusians' luckless queen,  
And church and court did mingle their array  
And mass and revel were alternate seen,  
Lordlings and freres—ill-sorted fry, I ween.—BYRON.

Que quem ha que por fama não conhece  
As obras portuguezas singulares ?—CAMÕES.

(For who knows not the fame of Portugal's high deeds?)

**T**HE village of Mafra is dwarfed by the immense convent, the largest but not the fairest building of Portugal. Built in the reign of João V., it is said to have cost over four million sterling and to have employed at one time 45,000 workmen, while the countless windows and doors are said to number respectively 2500 and 5200. It has been called the Escorial of Portugal, but it has none of the Escorial's mighty splendour. The whole convent, with the exception of the towers, is washed a light yellow and resembles a barracks, which it now actually is. A flock of brown sheep were grazing in the wide *praça* in front of the Church's great six-pillared entrance, the shepherd sitting on the flight of low steps



that, by their huge extent, give some idea of the vastness of the building. The Church is all of white and pink marble, of marble is even the *caracol* or winding-staircase up to the 114 bells and two huge clocks.<sup>1</sup> The *prior* of Chelleiros<sup>2</sup> was preaching a sermon, the day being a *feira*, and groups of men, mostly soldiers, stood in the great church immediately beneath the pulpit, while women sat along the choir, and bright-dressed peasant-women knelt or sat in circles here and there on the floor. A procession followed, with boys in black and red cloaks, like devils, and little girls dressed up as angels, with blue and silver wings; men dressed in red *confraria capas* and carrying long candles surrounded the umbrella and canopy beneath which walked the old *prior* of the church and two priests from other villages.

The road from Mafra to Gradil passes a deep ravine, running down to Ericeira and the sea, and then through pinewoods and hills covered with whin, heather, myrtle and other shrubs. Little villages, groups of whitewashed, brown-roofed houses, lie in hollows of steep hills covered with maize and vines and a few olives. Clear streams, hedges of wild roses, borage,

<sup>1</sup> Said to have cost 400 *contos* each, and now kept in order by a man who receives 6 *tostões* a day.

<sup>2</sup> A quiet village ten *kilomètres* from Mafra in a deep valley of hills covered with vines and maize and corn divided by rough walls of stones.

pink vetch and the glowing pink of the cistus flower give a quiet charm to the country. The road is almost deserted. Two long-faced thin-featured peasants pass, with black tasselled *gorros* and black sashes, carrying long sticks with ends of brass. A woman with brilliant pink skirt passes, running steadily from Ericeira to Gradil, some ten miles, and sometimes on to Torres Vedras, barefoot along the rough road in the full heat of the sun, with a great basket of *sardinhas* on her head. If she sells well she may earn as much as four or even five *tostões* in the day, after which she has to return along the many miles of road to Ericeira.

A few *kilomètres* from Torres Vedras is a little village of houses pinkwashed or white with blue doors and windows; on the iron balconies flower geraniums and carnations, and ivy geraniums, vine-trellises and hydrangeas grow along small terraces. A shorter way to Torres Vedras cuts across a bare hill scented with flowers. It is a broad rough-paved stoneway between hedges of aloes and wild roses, with a splendid view of a circle of hills, vineyards and small villages and on the other side the sea. Torres Vedras itself is a *villa*, below a hill with a small white church (*Santa Maria do Castello*), some olives and old ruinous walls, the *Serra do Montejunto* lying to the East. The road to Caldas da Rainha passes among moors and pinewoods, and, after Caldas,

more pines grow along the coast, graceful tufted single pines, or pines continuous along the horizon; here a low level line of dark hills is seen through thousands of pine stems, there white sand-dunes appear, still among pines. A silver stream flows seawards, and two ranges of dark hills, on some of which stand small wind-mills, together form the land-locked bay of São Martinho beneath a lion-shaped cliff. From Vallado dos Frades a wild *carreira*,<sup>1</sup> a kind of omnibus, proceeds furiously to Alcobaça, going crabwise with great leaps and bounds and lurches.

Alcobaça lies in a hollow of hills and valleys of vines, olives, fruit-trees, wheat and maize and tall hedges of reeds, with some dark pinewoods; to the West pinewoods, Vallado, Nazareth and the sea, to the East the bare brown *Serra dos Candieiros*. The swift stream Alcoba gives a coolness to its sunny hollow, and on the other side flows the Baça. The Alcoba passes the Monastery and a branch of it flows beneath the building, so that the damp covers with green a large part of the paved floor, some of the pillars and a whole tomb in the *Capella dos Tumulos*. From the road above Alcobaça, the brown and grey monastery appears in size equivalent to the rest of the village; it fronts a low line of

<sup>1</sup> *Carreira* really means 'course' or 'road,' but is thus antonomastically used of the vehicle that goes along the road.

iron-balconied houses backed by a hill of olives and vines and fruit-trees.

The Monastery of Alcobaca was built by Affonso Henriques, first King of Portugal, and was finished in 1222, more than a century and a half before the battle of Aljubarrota. The interior of its church, over three hundred feet long, is of a severe and marvellous beauty, the perfectly plain pillars, twenty-four in number and over sixty feet high, going up to the very roof and dividing the nave from two very narrow side aisles. In the *Sala dos Reis* stand the statues of the early Kings of Portugal, including Dionysius I., King Diniz (1279-1325), the only Portuguese king of that name, who built the splendid cloister. Here, too, is a huge bronze bowl or urn taken in the battle of Aljubarrota, which served to cook the dinners of the Spanish army and is said to weigh nearly a thousand pounds. The *Claustro de Dom Diniz* surrounds a garden of roses, carnations, dahlias, hollyhocks with pillars of an exquisite beauty; the many-pillared *Sala Capitular* looks out on to a second garden and on the pavement at its entrance is the image of a *geral* of the Order of Cistercians buried there ‘*por humildade*’ that all who went out and in might step upon him. Along the cloister-walls are ancient inscriptions, some of the thirteenth century; on one side the beautiful pillared *lavatorio* has an ancient font of water with



maidenhair ferns, and opposite is another pillared recess from which a stair went to the cloister's upper storey. The wealth of flowers sets in relief the austere beauty of the pillars; full of flowers too is the little cemetery in front of the chapel of *Nossa Senhora do Desterro*.

The beautiful church has no part more beautiful than the *Capella dos Tumulos*, a little chapel of plain Gothic arches, with exquisitely sculptured capitals, containing on the right the tombs of Queen Beatriz and King Pedro, on the left that of Dona Ignez and in a corner the rougher tombs of the three children of Pedro and Ignez. On the tomb of Dona Ignez, at the end facing that of Dom Pedro, is sculptured the Last Judgment. A stately procession winds up a path to heaven, with arms upraised in joyful praise; below, the same path is steeper, and a less serene, more motley company of figures goes toppling down to Hell; beneath is a throng in Purgatory. At the other end of the tomb is sculptured the Crucifixion, and along both sides scenes in the life of Christ, among many others those of the Last Supper, the Betrayal, the Garden of Gethsemane, the Washing of Pilate's Hands (the water poured from a single-handled *bilha* of present-day shape). All these scenes are given in marvellous detail, plain in its intricacy; just as the Church and cloister have an air of simple austerity in spite of the infinite richness



and variety of their sculpture. On these tombs are tiny rose-windows and arches, all carved with many a minute design, while many of the figures a few inches high have an expression of clearly marked character. The end of King Pedro's tomb facing that of Dona Ignez represents the last scenes in the King's life, the sides give episodes from the life of São Bartholomeu, saint of his especial devotion, and above these, all along the sides, are tiny groups of Dom Pedro and Dona Ignez, Dom Pedro and his Father, Dona Ignez and Dona Constança, and others. The further end is sculptured in the form of a rose-window, marvellously detailed and distinct, hidden away against the wall of the Chapel. It represents scenes in the life and death of Dona Ignez, Dom Pedro and Dona Ignez reading together from one book like the lovers of Dante—

Noi leggiavamo un giorno per diletto—

the death of Dona Ignez at the *Fonte dos Amores* at Coimbra, the execution at Santarem of two of her assassins; and many another tiny scene, all so clearly chiselled and delightfully expressed in stone that here even more than at Coimbra one may feel the full sadness of her fate and the prince's undying sorrow.

Ignez de Castro was the betrothed of Pedro (son of King Affonso IV. of Portugal), who,

after the death of his first wife, Dona Constança, refused to marry as his father wished, although he kept his marriage to Ignez secret. The Portuguese nobility thereupon pressed the King to consent to the death of Ignez; he consented, relented and then half consented, and she was murdered at Coimbra on the 7th of January, 1355. Succeeding to the throne in 1357, Dom Pedro had not forgotten, and two of the noble murderers were seized in Castille<sup>1</sup> and barbarously executed at Santarem. Moreover, he set the corpse of his betrothed crowned on a throne to receive the homage, the *beijamão*, of the nobles (so that Camões could say of Ignez that “she reigned after her death—depois de ser morta foi rainha”), certain of whom were then ordered to carry her to burial at Alcobaça.<sup>2</sup> Camões has set forth her death in not the least beautiful verses of the *Lusiads*:—

Para o ceo crystallino alevantando  
 Com lagrimas os olhos piedosos,  
 Os olhos, porque as mãos lhe estava atando  
 Um dos duros ministros rigorosos.—(iii. 125.)  
 (To the clear heaven she lifts her tearful eyes  
 While they relentlessly her hands are binding.)

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<sup>1</sup> The third happened to be out hunting and so escaped, a poor man to whom he daily gave alms warning him. “And the same poor man advised him to dress in old clothes and go thus on foot along the road that leads to Aragon, and to hire himself to the first carriers (*almocreves*) he should meet. And this he did and escaped, and reached Aragon and thence France.”—*Chronica de Dom Pedro*.

<sup>2</sup> The seventeen leagues of road from Coimbra to Alcobaça were lined for the procession by men carrying torches, a thousand to the league.

Assi como a bonina que cortada  
 Antes do tempo foi, candida e bella,  
 Sendo das mãos lascivas maltratada  
 Da menina que a trouxe na capella  
 O cheiro traz perdido e a côr murchada:  
 Tal está morta a pallida donzella,  
 Seccas do rosto as rosas e perdida  
 A branca e viva côr co'a doce vida.—(iii. 134.)

(Rough translation:—

As in girl's thoughtless fingers witherèd  
 A fair white flower, plucked before its time  
 To lie crushed idly upon breast or head,  
 Loses the scent and colour of its prime,  
 So now the pale young maiden lieth dead,  
 The roses from her face a cruel crime  
 Has banished, and the living hue is gone  
 With ebbing life that once there clearly shone.)

Before Camões (1525–1580) Garcia de Resende (1470–1536) had sung her death in his quaint and vivid *Trovas á morte de Dona Inês de Castro*:

Eu era moça menina,  
 Por nome Dona Inês  
 De Crasto, e de tal doutrina  
 E vertudes qu'era dina  
 De meu mal ao revés.<sup>1</sup>

As she sat at leisure, with sad thoughts far from her mind, in her palace at Coimbra she saw the King come riding “pelos campos do Mondego” and alight at her door, and her heart misgave her:

Estava muito acatada,  
 Como princesa servida,

---

<sup>1</sup> I was a young maiden, Dona Inês de Crasto by name, in my piety and virtues deserving the very contrary of my fate.

Em meus paços mui honrada,  
De tudo mui abastada,  
De meu senhor mui querida.  
Estando mui de vagar  
Bem fóra de tal cuidar,  
Em Coimbra d'assesego,  
Pelos campos do Mondego  
Cavaleiros vi assomar.

Como cousas que hão de ser  
Logo dão no coração,  
Comecei entristecer  
E commigo só dizer :  
' Estes omens onde irão ?  
E tanto que perguntei ;  
Soube logo que era el rei.  
Quando o vi tam apressado  
Meu coração trespassado  
Foi, que nunca mais falei.

E quando vi que decia  
Sahi á porta da sala,  
Devinhando o que queria ;  
Com gram choro e cortesia  
Lhe fiz uma triste fala.  
Meus filhos pus derredor  
De mim com gram humildade,  
Mui cortada de temor  
Lhe disse : ' Havei, senhor,  
D'esta triste piedade. . . .

. . . Havei dó, senhor, de mim,  
Não me deis tam triste fim  
Pois que nunca fiz maldade.

(Greatly was I respected, and served as a princess, greatly honoured in my palace, well supplied with everything, and well loved by my lord. Being one day at leisure, far from thought of any such grief, quietly in Coimbra, I saw horsemen appear in the plains of the Mondego. And as things that are to be strike with warning on the heart, I began to grow sad, and alone with myself to say : ' Where can these men be going ? ' so that I even made inquiry, and thus learnt that it was the King. When I saw that he came in such haste my heart was pierced, so that not another word I

spoke. And when I saw that he was alighting from his horse I went out to the door of the hall, guessing for what he came, and with great weeping and courtesies spoke sadly to him. Humbly, my children round me, and fearfully I spoke : ‘Have pity, Sir, on me. . . . Have mercy, Sir, and give me not so sad an end, since I have done no evil.’)

The King is moved by her to relent, but the nobles taunt him with being “changed from his purpose by a woman’s tears,” and foretell “muita guerra com Castella,” till the King tells them, weak and cowardly, to do the deed if it must be done, but not to tell him of it since he saw no reason for her death :—

Se o vós quereis fazer  
Fazei-o sem m’o dizer,  
Qu’eu nisso não mando nada  
Nem vejo a essa coitada  
Porque deva de morrer.

(If you would do the deed, do it without telling me, for I in this give no command and see no reason why the poor girl must die.)

The tombs at Alcobaça are fully worthy of these noble verses. Their sculpture has in some degree the imaginative power and splendour of conception, the clear and serene workmanship, the exquisite details, the mediaeval quaintnesses that characterize the *Divina Commedia*. Portugal may have more famous buildings, but none can show more delightful sculpture than this Cistercian *Mosteiro de Santa Maria*, nor rival it in the simple Gothic magnificence of its church and cloister. The combined effect of the severe architecture



and the incomparable minute sculpture of the capitals is, indeed, wonderfully beautiful. The wealth and power of the monks was great, their influence extended over the whole wide valley and they gave their name to Vallado dos Frades nearly five miles away. Now the monastery is occupied by a regiment of soldiers, part of it serving as the *cadeia*, from which the prisoners look through bars into the village street.

The road from Alcobaça winds up a long hill and is bordered by deep hedges of aloe and blackberry and honeysuckle, wild vine and wild roses. The many wells<sup>1</sup> are conspicuous, owing to their giant fishing-rods, the rod a rough trunk of pine, the line a thinner pole with a vessel hooked at the end for drawing up the water. Little sleepy *vendas*, with shelves of tiny white cheeses (*queijinhos*), sell wine and brandy (in *bilhas* from Caldas da Rainha) and lemonade manufactured at Alcobaça. After a few *kilomètres* the road narrows into the street of the small village of Aljubarrota with its ancient sculptured crosses, and a Latin inscription on the house of Brites,<sup>2</sup> the heroic *padeira* (baker) of the battle of

<sup>1</sup> In many parts of Portugal are *noras*, wells similar to the *nórias* of Valencia and Andalucía, from which the water is drawn by a mule or donkey turning a great wheel of earthenware jars. Near Coimbra is to be seen a *nora* of a different kind, the jars and wheel being replaced by tins on iron chains, and, as if to accentuate the difference, the necessary turning is done by an ox, while the well, instead of being in the open, is beneath a tiled roof.

<sup>2</sup> The same name as Beatrice.

Aljubarrota, who is said to have slain seven Castilians with her *pá* (Span. *pala*, 'wooden shovel'). The battle, in which John I. of Portugal routed John I. of Spain, was fought on the 14th of August, 1385 :—

Aqui a fera batalha se encruce  
 Com mortes, gritos, sangue e cutiladas,  
 A multidão da gente que perece  
 Tem as flores da propria côr mudadas,  
 Já as costas dão e as vidas, já fallece  
 O furor e sobejam as lançadas ;  
 Já de Castella o Rei desbaratado  
 Se vê, e de seu proposito mudado.

—CAMÕES, *Lusiads*, iv. 42.

(But here the battle deepens, with many a death,  
 Clamour, and shedding of blood, and furious thrust,  
 At sight of thousands yielding their last breath  
 Men pale and flee, but still they bite the dust,  
 For now they fall the serried spears beneath  
 Although of slaying dies their frenzied lust ;  
 And now Castilla's King, of victory cheated,  
 Sees all his army melt, his plans defeated.)

The monastery of *Santa Maria da Victoria* at Batalha<sup>1</sup> was the result. The road from Aljubarrota passes on through mile on mile of scented pinewoods, the bleak *Serra dos Candieiros* to the left. Batalha in a deep hollow, hidden below pines and olives, suddenly appears in the infinity of its grey traceries and pinnacles and light flying-buttresses. Below, it is mostly yellow ; it is built of a stone which at first is white as snow, but with time turns, in the sun

<sup>1</sup> Cf. 'Battle' Abbey.

and rain, or even when sheltered from the weather, to grey or yellow—in many parts it is yellow like ripe corn, or like the recently stripped trunks of cork-trees. The restored Apostles at the entrance are slowly yellowing in their daily sunbath; some of their maimed veteran predecessors may be seen in the interior. The effect of the interior of the church, simple and austere—the single pillars, clustered pillars and tall narrow Gothic arches, and the large beautifully framed windows—is most striking and magnificent. Swallows circle with shrill cries round pillar and capital, and Dom Duarte and Dona Leonor gaze up at them carved in stone. The window above the entrance and those above the *altar môr* and the small figures in the centre of the side-windows are of fine old stained glass, deep-coloured; but the other windows, those of the Chapel of the Founder, João I. and his wife,<sup>1</sup> and, unhappily, all but the tiny central figures of the side-windows are of very bad and ugly modern glass, a sacrilege in such frames and an insult to so fair a building.

The *Claustro Real* is Manueline, with a Gothic *Sala do Capitulo*, in one corner of which hangs, as a corbel, a little statue said to be that of Affonso Domingues,<sup>2</sup> first architect of Batalha.

<sup>1</sup> Philippa of Lancaster, daughter of John of Gaunt.

<sup>2</sup> He died at the end of the 14th or beginning of the 15th century. For a romantic account of his last years and death see Alexandre Herculano, *Lendas e Narrativas*.

holding a ruler in his left hand. In the *Capellas Imperfeitas*, as in the *Claustro Real*, crowd the chains, cables and globes of the *arte Manuelina*. One cannot call these 'Unfinished Chapels' beautiful, yet they are beautiful; certainly beautiful in their details if not as a whole. One Manueline arch (*portal*), especially, is a riot of fanciful design with an immense richness of varied detail; but it has the effect rather of satisfied abundance than of restless tortured striving, it is almost placid in spite of its incredible and overwhelming intricacy, as it were a rich harvest of many fruits in stone. The delicate traceries that make the stone to blossom like the rose, the infinity of slenderly chiselled patterns, the luxuriance in design and the minute care in execution, make the study of this arch alone a delightful task of many hours. The Monastery of Batalha is of immense size, and the passing visitor must be torn between two desires, that of spending his whole time looking at the outside and that of spending his whole time looking at the inside of the building. It is no slight charm of Batalha, as of Alcobaça and of Mafra, that the village has an appearance of being still as it were a dependency of the Convent, and has not acquired any pretensions of its own.

## CHAPTER XV

### KING DINIZ AND LEIRIA ON THE LIZ

Rei que reis fez e desfez.—FRANCISCO DE SÁ DE MIRANDA,  
of King Diniz. (King who made and unmade Kings.)

**B**ETWEEN Batalha and Leiria are more scented pinewoods, planted by King Diniz or Denis, one of the most original and strangely attractive characters among the early Portuguese kings. He is said to have been avaricious,<sup>1</sup> he was certainly an autocrat; and probably, when he refused to spend money as other people wished, they called him a miser; we read of him that “fiz quanto quiz—he acted according to his heart’s desire.” It was he, says the legend, who forebade his wife, the Queen-Saint Elizabeth, to give alms to the poor; she, however, continued in her charity, and upon a famous occasion her crusts were miraculously turned to roses, and she escaped the wrath of King Diniz.<sup>2</sup> But certainly we cannot quarrel with the parsimony of a king who ordered such works as the cloister at Alcobaça, the castle above Leiria and the pine

<sup>1</sup> The *Chronica del Rei Dom Dinis*, however, notes especially, among many other virtues, his truthfulness, justice and liberality.

<sup>2</sup> See Chapter XXII.



forest in its neighbourhood ; and, if we may believe the poet Francisco de Sá de Miranda, who died in 1558, he was a man excellent and just and feared God :—

alto e excellente  
Dom Denis, rei tam louvado,  
Tam justo, a Deus tam temente.

(High and excellent Dom Denis, a king whose praises have been so often sung, a king so just and one so fearing God.)

Moreover, he protected agriculture and built strongholds far and wide through the country. Of him Camões wrote that he rebuilt noble towns and renewed the whole realm with fortresses and walls and castles :—

Nobres villas de novo edificou,  
Fortalezas, castellos mui seguros,  
E quasi o reino todo renovou  
Com edificios grandes e altos muros.

And he was a poet, the first<sup>1</sup> celebrated lyric poet of Portugal.

The little town of Leiria is in the valley of the Liz. Shady walks line the margin of the swift-flowing river in the town, and, immediately outside, the Liz passes with many white falls and rapids through willows and reeds and alders, along little terraces and gardens of fruits and vegetables and flowers, vines and maize. Women stand in the water perpetually washing

<sup>1</sup> “Quasi o primeiro,” says the Chronicle ; “el primero,” says Lope de Vega. He was really one of the later provençal-Portuguese poets.

clothes, and women and girls in bright reds and yellows crowd to the great *chafariz* near the river and, setting their tall graceful red *bilhas*, sometimes half the girl's height, upon its marble balustrade, gossip, and then separate in groups of two and three on their various ways. They carry the great jars on their heads to all parts of the town, up steep cobbled streets, and out through fields of wheat and vine, and up to the houses about the Castle, which stands sheer above the town on its high hill of grey and yellow-lichened rock and tall-flowering aloes.

A narrow, cobbled street goes up through houses of many levels, with little terraces of flowers and fruit-trees, and then under an archway to an old irregular square in which the beautiful entrance-arch of a church, half-hidden in cherry-trees, seems to be crumbling and melting away like salt, one of its pillars now in parts scarcely more than an inch thick. A small part of the huge ruined castle of Dom Diniz remains entire, groined ceiling, tall narrow-arched windows and beautiful capitals; and every here and there, in walls overgrown with snapdragon and other plants, one may come upon lovely fragments of windows or arches and a great coat of arms. Through glassless windows, beautiful as those of Batalha, appeared the cloudless sunset sky. A thrush was singing below in the olives. Hundreds of

feet immediately beneath the Castle the town was busy in its evening life. Slow ox-carts and loaded *diligencias* were coming in, noiseless apparently; labourers returned, *pioche* on shoulder, from the fields; women came from the river with baskets of washing or with *bilhas* from the fountain. Black-gowned students and grey soldiers sauntered along the riverwalks, and the less energetic sat at their windows after the heat of the day. In a narrow street on the way down from the Castle children were burning candle-ends set among flowers to a tiny paper Saint who ran great peril of cremation. Everywhere was a sense of peace, and even in these narrower streets a feeling of the open country. For, lying among wooded hills, many of them crowned by a white church, Leiria has an air and scent of many trees and open fields, a little town pleasant in itself and in the country that surrounds it.

## CHAPTER XVI

### FROM LEIRIA TO THOMAR AND BEIRA BAIXA

O nome ufano

Do bellicoso reino lusitano.—CAMÕES.

(The proud name of Lusitania's warlike realm.)

SOME thirty miles of road, blindingly white in a summer *calma*,<sup>1</sup> lead through pinewoods with wide intervals of corn from Leiria to Thomar. Little villages are set high in the hills with far views of range upon range of more hills beyond. Quinta de Sardinha, a wretched hamlet, has its monthly market under olive-trees, to which the farmers troop along the road on donkeys from far and near, many of them holding little black umbrellas against the sun. The little inn of the village is then crowded with peasants and farmers and with women wearing red or red and yellow kerchiefs, gold earrings, chains and necklaces; and a theological student from Coimbra, or, rather, the theological student of the village, in antique black and canvas shirt and flowing bow tie, converses with them in the inn with an air

<sup>1</sup> A *calma* is when the sun, though perhaps slightly veiled in a mist of heat, glares with an overwhelming might, and the air is breathless.

of friendly and benign superiority. The road passes through the little town of Villa Nova de Ourem, crosses the railway line at Chão das Maças (Plain of Apples), where are quarries and stores of pine-timber but no sign of apples, and at length the massive building of Thomar's convent appears on its hill of olives.

Thomar is a little town of many small shops and several paper factories and one of cotton, lying on the river Nabão and all encircled with green. Clean rough-cobbled streets, mostly without pavements, lead from the white and black paved *Praça da Republica* with its trees and *pelourinho*, its vegetable market on the cobbles, and the sharp-towered, fair-arched church of *São João Baptista*. Thomar has many other churches of many different periods, *Santa Maria do Olival* which contains the tomb of the Grand Master of the Templars, Gualdim Paes, who built the church in the twelfth century, the sixteenth-century church of *Nossa Senhora da Conceição*, the seventeenth-century *Nossa Senhora da Piedade* to which steps climb up the whole of its steep hill outside the town. A rough-cobbled way leads up to the Convent of the Templars. On a dull morning birds sing quietly in the olives. Women, wearing long scarlet kerchiefs, were reaping with gleaming sickles a field of corn, bordered by aloes, immediately below the Convent, where an old ruined castle of yellow



stone fronts the yellow-lichened tower of a chapel, also in ruins.

At the entrance of the Convent itself is a Latin inscription in quaint ancient characters. It tells how in 1208 the King of Morocco besieged the castle "with 400,000 horse and 500,000 foot," and was defeated by the Templars, commanded by Gualdim Paes (or Gual Dimpaes). The exterior of the church by João de Castilho shows the *arte Manuelina* at its best. The rose-window (above the little cloister of Santa Barbara) is of sails marvellously carved in stone; to the right the Garter, to the left a mighty chain bind trees together, their roots showing below, and the windows along the church are all set in coral. Coral and trees, chain and sails are all sculptured with a certain fantastic fitness and grandeur and even beauty. The interior of the church is magnificently simple, in spite of the Manueline ropes down the pillars of its windows. Indeed, the sculptured ropes and armillary spheres are so common in the Convent that they are often scarcely noticed, and some of the twisted ropes of stone are so tiny that they are scarcely seen. The carved stalls of this wonderfully beautiful church disappeared during the French invasion. A Manueline arch leads into the original round church of the Templars; it now has Manueline additions, and the pillars have been painted and the capitals gilt.

The Convent has no less than eight cloisters, a confusion of courts and passages. That of Dom Henrique ('the Seafarer,' who was Grand Master for many years till his death in 1460) is of plain Gothic arches of double pillars, with beautifully sculptured capitals, and contains the tomb of Diogo da Gama, brother of Vasco. Beyond the cloister of Santa Barbara and the cloister of João III., "rei de muitos reis—king of many kings," is yet another cloister, *das Hospedarias*, where a few officers have rooms. From the upper gallery of the Cloister of Dom João III., a door opens on to a stone terrace with a low balustrade of plain stone, along the top of which runs a tiny hollowed channel of water. From this terrace there is a view exquisitely beautiful of the *Quinta dos Sete Montes* (the Seven Hills), soft wooded hills of olive and pine and cypress, while immediately below is the former Convent-garden, full of fruits and flowers, now belonging to the Conde de Thomar.

Thomar is not many miles from the Tagus and Abrantes, the little town of Junot's title, standing on a steep hill above the Tagus and looking across the river valley to the hills that extend towards Spain. From Abrantes a road of over a hundred *kilomètres* goes, half in Extremadura, half in Beira Baixa, to Castello Branco. Near Abrantes it goes between immense hedges of myrtle and blackberry and honeysuckle

with white and glowing pink cistus flowers, fox-gloves, chicory, and thistles purple and pink, thistles blue and white and yellow ; later through olives and corktrees, and then endless pine-covered hills, with occasional glimpses of distant blue plains and mountains. The little sun-burnt villages are picturesque and miserable, without window-frames, without chimneys, mostly unwhitewashed, of yellow stone with brown roofs in olive trees. Sobreira, the most considerable of these villages, has its *Largo da Republica* and its *Rua Machado Santos*, but is largely without glass or chimneys ; walls over which trail ivy-geranium, plumbago and wistaria make the village beautiful. At the back of the inn, from the little square window of the room which is stable and kitchen and dining-room in one, the view of the valley is wide and lovely and the *Serra da Estrella* is seen a faint grey-blue in the distance.

The men wear short jackets of black or brown, or perhaps of olive-coloured velvet with gold buttons. Tall and thin-featured, their hats in size rival those to be seen at Elvas, but they have not the great whiskers of Alemtejo, being mostly clean-shaven. The women have pleasant, clean-cut, kindly faces. In Beira Baixa the pinewoods give way to wilder, more treeless hills, with little strips of maize and vegetables along the streams. These cultivated strips are

watered from the streams by means of a curious wooden scoop at the end of a long pole, the man or woman standing in the stream and hurling the water sideways, often across a wall, on to the crops.

Still more treeless grows the country before Castello Branco (besides high-lying Guarda the only town of Beira Baixa), until the hills are entirely bare, covered only with cistus. A tributary of the river Ocrea, and ultimately of the Tagus, flows through irregular backbones of cistus-covered hills, recalling the Bidasoa. The road is closely edged with many-flowered myrtle; the road, indeed, during all its sixty-five miles cuts its way through cistus and other hill-plants pressing so thickly that it would seem as if, upon the least neglect of the *cantoneiros*, they would swallow the road in their heavy-scented growth. Near Castello Branco are some chestnuts and vines, allowed here, as in Minho, to climb throttling over fruit-trees, and field after field of corn. On a hill grazes a huge flock of white sheep, the brown-dressed, broad-hatted shepherd outlined on the sky; through a field of golden-ripe corn goes a peasant girl, wearing kerchief and skirt of red. On its hill Castello Branco gleams white across the plain, although its low houses are washed in many hues; the town itself has many trees and gardens, but the plain all round is treeless.

## CHAPTER XVII

### PINEWOODS OF EXTREMADURA

Ay flores, ay flores do verde pino,  
Se sabedes novas do meu amigo?  
Ay Deus! e hu é?

Ay flores, ay flores do verde ramo,  
Se sabedes novas do meu amado?  
Ay Deus! e hu é?

—*Cantar de Amigo by King Diniz.*

Flower, flower of the green pine-tree,  
Can you not tell me where he be?  
Heavens, where is my love?  
Flower, flower of the branches green,  
My beloved have you not seen?  
Ah, Heavens, where is he?

THE pine-tree is never for many miles absent in Portugal; it is to be found among the fruit-trees of Algarve and in the *charnecas* of Alemtejo; it covers the sand-dunes of Douro and the hills of Minho. But the pinewoods of Extremadura have a peculiar magnificence, and especially those around Leiria, whether on the way from Batalha to Leiria or on the way from Leiria to Thomar. Their pleasant scented shade is ever welcome. Little earthenware pots on the ground fill with resin; sometimes there are four



to a tree but always on the ground, never fixed to the tree as in the *Landes* of the South of France, whence the trees for the forest round Leiria came. Above the thick pines the sky is cloudless, and beneath is a red carpet of heather. Now and then a cone falls lazily in the breathless afternoon, a dry sound is heard of hidden birds tapping the cones with their beaks high in the trees. In a clearing a man is slowly kneading red clay to make tiles, and in the distance sounds the droning 'song' of cart-wheels. Never do the bright blues and reds and yellows of the peasant women's dresses show more brightly than as they pass through these woods of dark pine.

Here on a day of sultry heat, when the dust is hurled in sudden gusts along the pitilessly white road, a refuge of cool shade is found in deep colonnaded avenues and slippery glades of needles and heather. Here, too, those who have learnt the terrible hardness of the Portuguese beds may pleasantly spend a short June night, with greater chance of sleep. The pinestems sweep upwards like pillars of Batalha, framed in a cloudless sunset sky that fades from brown-red to green and saffron, and overhead to a soft blue-grey, set with a few faint stars. Or on one side of a golden sunset a misty distant plain lies grey and purple under a sky of clearest green, and to the East the pinewoods slope upwards

against a sky of the softest imaginable blue, faint and dreaming. Eça de Queiroz speaks somewhere of “um sumptuoso ceo de verão tão cheio de estrelas que todo elle parecia uma densa poeirada d’ouro vivo suspensa immóvel por cima dos montes negros—a splendid summer sky so full of stars that the whole of it seemed a thick dust of living gold hung motionless above the dark mountains.” But often the summer sky in Portugal by night scarcely seems to lose its clear softness of day ; the stars appear lightly set without intensity, a faint mist of sprinkled silver sinking into a yielding woof of grey rather than, as, for instance, in Andalucia, hard knobs of glowing gold thronging in a sky of deepest blue.

The traveller from his bed of heather heaped in his mighty halls of pinestems, may watch through the Gothic arches the marvel of changing colours in the West and all the miracle of the light of a day that dies. All is so still that it seems as if the whole world has stopped to look on, “breathless in adoration”; only a peasant returns slowly from his work and women in dull browns and reds and greens go up steep paths with *bilhas* or great loads of new-cut grass on their heads. From below comes a tinkling of goat bells and distant shouts, and the croaking of frogs somewhere in the valley; then all merges into a silence of growing shadows and

the magic of "a pure June midnight's scented soul":—

A horas y en lugar  
Que esten solas las estrellas  
De presente,  
Los arboles sin lunar.<sup>1</sup>

(The place and hour when stars alone are near and all the trees are dark.)

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<sup>1</sup> Gil Vicente. The Spanish *lunar* in its commonest meaning (mole) is far from a poetical word, but it is here used for the Portuguese *luar* (moonlight).

## CHAPTER XVIII

### THE SERRA DA ESTRELLA

Mungem suas ovelhas cento a cento.—CAMÕES.

O Lusitania señora  
Tu te puedes alabar  
De desposada dichosa  
Y pámpano de la rosa  
Y sirena de la mar ;  
Frescura de las verduras,  
Rocío de la alvorada,  
Perla bien aventurada,  
Estrella de las alturas,  
Garza blanca namorada.

—GIL VICENTE, *Auto da Lusitania*.

THE Serra da Estrella, in Beira Baixa, is the highest mountain range in Portugal, rising above Manteigas to a height of 1993 *mètres*, and the peasants further South tell with awe of the snows that fall there every year, and of the serpents of the *Serra* with eyes as large as a *dez réis* piece. The *Serra do Gerez* further North in Alto Minho and Traz-os-Montes is perhaps more beautiful, having many woods, and slopes covered in early summer with rhododendrons. Its height is 1507 *mètres* (Mt. Carris) and it runs in a South-West direction for some twenty miles, from the village of Pitas to the river Caldo. Gerez, or Caldas do

Gerez, is a little village of two or three hundred inhabitants, but is visited by many hundreds every year on account of its waters. From there one may cross the *Serra* to Portella do Homem or to Ponte Fria. The transmontane part of the *Serra do Gerez* is wilder, but in Minho it is thickly wooded, oaks growing at a height of over 3500 feet. But the *Serra da Estrella* is the very heart of Portugal; here one may find the true Portuguese character untouched by civilization—a noble simplicity, vigour, courage, courtesy.

Strabo<sup>1</sup> quaintly says of the Lusitanians of the mountains that “they live principally upon goats, and they sacrifice a goat to Mars and also their prisoners, and horses.” Although they no longer sacrifice to Mars, in many respects the inhabitants of the *Serra* have altered little through the centuries. The spirit of Gil Vicente (? 1470–1539 or 1540) still appears to haunt these hills; the peasants and charcoal burners and herdsmen, living an open-air life far removed from newspapers and books, preserve his joyous humour and simple faith, and seem to echo his praise of the *Criador liberal*:—

Com gloria mui sem trabalho  
Fartas os mares e rios  
E as hervas de rocios

---

<sup>1</sup> Τραγοφαγοῦσι δὲ μάλιστα καὶ τῷ Ἄρει τράγον θύουσι καὶ τοὺς αἰχμη-  
λῶτους καὶ ἵππους.



E os lírios de orvalho  
Nos logares mais sombrios.

(In glory without toil Thou fillest  
Seas and river streams,  
And, where no light beams,  
For the lilies dew distillest,  
And the drenched grass gleams.)

or his shepherd's *vilancete* :—

Adorae montanhas  
O Deos das alturas,  
Tambem as verduras,  
Adorae desertos  
E serras floridas  
O Deos dos secretos,  
O Senhor das vidas ;  
Ribeiras crescidas  
Louvae nas alturas  
Deos das creaturas.  
Louvae arvoredos  
De fructo presado,  
Digão os penedos :  
Deos seja louvado.  
E louve meu gado  
Nestas verduras  
O Deos das alturas.

(*Obras de Gil Vicente*. Hamburgo, 1834. Roughly translated :—

Ye mountains adore,  
And all green places,  
The Lord on high ;  
Bless Him desert spaces  
And ye flowered hills  
His praises cry,  
God of breath who fills  
With life the secret ways ;  
Praise Him, ye deep streams, praise  
On high evermore.  
Praise Him ye trees,  
That fruit downweighs,  
Let the rocks say :

To God be praise.  
And my flocks shall raise  
In these pastures green  
Song to God unseen.)

In his *Tragicomedia pastoril da Serra da Estrella* the *Serra* appears as a shepherdess in Coimbra, as a mountain shepherdess of Beira, her abode :—

Em figura de pastora  
Feita serrana da Beira  
Como quem na Beira mora,

and offers gifts to the Queen : cheeses and calves and lambs of Cea,<sup>1</sup> chestnuts of Gouvea,<sup>2</sup> milk “for fourteen years” from Manteigas and cloth from Covilhã.<sup>3</sup> The *Serra* still abounds in

<sup>1</sup> Mandara a villa de Cea  
Quinhentos queijos recentes  
Todos feitos a candea,  
E mais trezentas bezerras  
E mil ovelhas meirinhas  
E duzentas cordeirinhas,  
Taes que em nenhũa serra  
Não as achem tão gordinhas.

(The town of Cea will send five hundred fresh cheeses, all made overnight, and, moreover, three hundred calves and a thousand sheep and two hundred lambs, such that fatter could not be found on any hills.)

<sup>2</sup> E Gouvea mandara  
Dous mil sacos de castanha

(And Gouvea will send two thousand sacks of chestnuts.)

<sup>3</sup> E Manteigas lhe dara  
Leite para quatorze annos,  
E Covilhan muitos pannos  
Finos que se fazem lá.

(And Manteigas will give milk for fourteen years, and Covilhan much fine cloth that is manufactured there.)

chestnuts and cheeses, and Covilhã still has its factories<sup>1</sup> above a brawling stream that passes below the town. To the South the *Serra da Estrella* is prolonged in the *Serra da Gardunha* (about 4000 ft.), approached from Castello Branco across a wide boulder-strewn plain, with villages along the foot of the Serra—Castello Novo, Alpedrinha, Val de Prazeres, Fundão, Alcaria, Tortozende. At their little stations, among vines and hollyhocks, women sell fruit and strange biscuits and water. Above, on the *serra*, may be heard a shepherd playing on his pipe as the evening deepens,

Tangendo a frauta donde o gado pace.—CAMÕES.

(Playing upon his pipe while his flock feeds.)

Some of the villages in the *Serra da Estrella* at night glint and glimmer like sprinkled quick-silver, the lights of others are yellow, like glow-worms. Covilhã at night is one of the prettiest sights imaginable, its snow-white towers and houses lit up on its steep hill by silver lines of lamps, a fairy magic of white and silver against the black *serra*. It covers the top of an abrupt hill and its cobbled streets are very steep. It has four or five pointed white church-towers, and but few of its houses are pink or yellow ; beneath

<sup>1</sup> The long brown, almost sack-cloth coloured cloaks worn by the peasants of Alemtejo are made here from the brown wool of Alemtejan sheep. Some of these cloaks have a lining of scarlet flannel and a collar of fur. They reach to the feet and have a smaller cape to the waist and side capes for the arms.

it on the hill are many chestnuts, and terraces of corn and gardens of fruit and vegetables. At the back is the high bare *Serra da Estrella*, and in front stretches a wide plain of lower *serras*. A beautiful view of the town, across a hill of pines, is from the road at the foot of a tiny hamlet high on the mountain-side, called *Aldeia do Carvalho* (Oak Village).

Twice a week, on Thursdays and Sundays, there is high market at Covilhã. Then the *Praça do Municipio* is from an early hour filled with women sitting on the cobbles in front of huge baskets of broa (soft, flat loaves of maize-bread, bright yellow inside and brown of crust), selling at a *vintem*, a *meia tostão* and a *tostão*. Immediately above, in a second *praça* is the market of fruit and vegetables and of large flat cheeses. The women wear their kerchiefs entirely covering the hair and tied beneath the chin, of every conceivable shade of blue and green and yellow, red, orange, purple, brown; some of them with a pattern of flowers, and nearly all of delicate soft dyes, so that the open, densely crowded market of moving colours in this *praça* is a sight extraordinarily beautiful. From all the country round the peasants come in to Covilhã with cheeses, fruit and vegetables, or with ponies charcoal-laden or donkeys hidden beneath their great burdens of *matto*.

From Teixosa, a small village of brown

houses and a fine new school, a road leads along the mountain-side, ending in a path which goes sheer across the *serra* to Verdelhos, and then across a second, even higher wing of the *serra* to Manteigas. The path is exceedingly rough and steep and entirely shadeless, but it is commonly used (in preference to the longer road) by peasants and shepherds and sellers of charcoal. The rounded treeless mountains of rocks and loose stones are thickly overgrown with thyme and bracken and heather and yellow cistus. There is no sound but that of the goat bells, and one passes but some solitary aged *rebanheiro* (herdsman) leaning on his staff and wearing a felt hat of great width and no definite shape, or a group of boys standing in the heather, also with staffs and broad-rimmed hats, their sheep and goats scattered above and below on the steep mountain-side. At night they sleep in the open or in stone huts; far or near there is no shade or shelter, not a shrub or tree to be found against the summer sun and cruel winter winds. The proverb says, that “quem joga não guarda cabras,” and the saying may be reversed since, certainly, keeping goats in the bare *serra* is not child’s play. The herdsmen receive six *vintens* a day, and spend their lives—

Ao vento, á chuva, ao sol pastoreando os gados,  
Deitando-se ao luar nas pedras dos eirados,



Atravessando á noite os solitarios montes,  
Dormindo a boa sesta ao pé das claras fontes.<sup>1</sup>

(In wind, in rain, in sun keeping their flocks,  
Taking their rest by moonlight among rocks,  
Crossing at night the solitary mountains,  
Sleeping fair midday sleep by crystal fountains.)

Sometimes the flocks and herds are of many hundreds and seem to cover a mountain-side; when a storm comes swiftly across the *serra* and heights and heather are suddenly dark, one may hear the shepherds shouting to their flocks, in the deserted hills, chiefly as a kind of encouragement to themselves, since shelter there is none.

<sup>1</sup> Guerra Junqueiro, *A Velhice do Padre Eterno*.

## CHAPTER XIX

### VILLAGES OF THE SERRA

São offerecimentos verdadeiros

E palavras sinceras, não dobradas.—CAMÕES.

(Offers sincere and true words without guile.)

**W**HERE a first beginning of the river Zezere flows from a great circle of mountains four and five thousand feet high over white stones and rocks, with magnificently deep-green transparent pools, and beneath pines and olives and chestnut trees, is to be discovered the little village of Verdelhos. No road leads to it, and it lies in so deep a hollow that on one side a few steps taken away from it bury it entirely out of view. On the other side from the top of the *serra* one sees the roofs of Verdelhos many hundreds of yards sheer below, looking like a great brown loaf of rye-bread cut into little square chunks. At first the strangeness of this view may be attributed to the position of the village so far and so sheer below, till one realizes that in all the roofs there is not a single chimney to break their straight monotony. Only three houses in the village have any whitewash, and the only street with a name is an irregular lane with the words *Rua*

*direita* (straight street, corresponding to 'Grand Rue' and 'High Street') scrawled in crooked letters on one of the bare, glassless houses.

Little poles projecting from between the stones support large pans of carnations on the walls of the houses, and there are even a few dark-shaded weather-worn balconies or verandahs with posts going up to the deep eaves. But mostly the women sat in the street along the shade of the eaves, while the two *vendas* were crowded with men, it being Sunday and a *feira*, a day of procession and *musica* and *baile* in the afternoon. In the small *praça* by the church (not yet called *Praça da Republica*) a crowd pressed about a man who was reading out a list of those who had contributed to the village priest in kind or money for the *feira*. Why is the notice not posted simply on the church door? The answer is given in the official statistics (A.D. 1900), which show that Verdelhos at the end of last century had 264 houses, and 1048 inhabitants, of whom 462 men and 508 women could not write or read. And there can have been little change in the interval, since twelve years in a village so remote, so *sertanejo*,<sup>1</sup> as the Portuguese say, is as a twelve-month in the more frequented ways of men.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> From *sertão*, a desert.

<sup>2</sup> Manteigas in 1900 had 1045 houses and 4052 inhabitants, of whom 1461 men and 1842 women were *analfabetos*. Manteigas is the sixth most important town (or village) in Beira Baixa.

The 'inn' was crowded, a little pitch-dark room or cave without windows, the only light coming from the door, and that entirely blocked, between twenty and thirty men standing in this tiny shed or sitting on the floor—the ground. The counter was the only other seat, with a *garrafão* of brandy and another of red wine; two rough planks, fixed to the wall of plain stone behind it, formed shelves containing three doubtful ancient bottles, a few thick glasses and a small sack of sugar. So much might be seen in the blackness when a movement about the door gave entrance to yet another customer. The serviceableness of the peasants who crowd the inn and their hospitality to the stranger are unfailing, one going out into the burning sun to fetch icy fresh water, another to look for a loaf or part of a loaf of yellow maize-bread, a third offering cigarettes, another going hundreds of yards to point out the way across the *serra* to Manteigas. Most of the men are dressed in brown, some in black with short Eton-like coats, wide curving felt hats and white shirts without ties. The women wear bright kerchiefs of green or gold, all being dressed gaily for the coming *feira*, concerning which the lonely shepherd in the *serra* will inquire of the wayfarer from Verdelhos “*se tem visto a feira em baixo, no povo.*”

From Verdelhos scarlet-skirted women go

across the *Serra da Estrella* by rough stony paths to Manteigas, carrying on their heads huge baskets of fruit and vegetables and starting before the dawn. They say that it is "a long league" or "two short leagues," but it is really two hours or more of difficult going. One whole mountain-side is in summer purple with lavender, and, nearer Manteigas, the path goes steeply down through pines and chestnuts, or with flowers above and below it, magnificent clumps of dark purple lavender, glowing white masses of cistus in flower, great shrubs of white or pink wild roses, foxgloves, harebells and many other mountain flowers; below flows another branch of the river Zezere and a ravine goes up to the *Posto do Inferno*.

Manteigas is a marvellous quaint village of narrow streets and courts, frowning houses of massive granite, and little grey-brown hovels. Streams of water flow through the streets, the jutting verandahs overhead are curiously built of tiles or wooden laths, and the roofs present the appearance of having been thrown up into the air and of having remained at random as they fell, at every imaginable level and angle. The doorways are inky black spaces, the windows innocent of glass, although there are some better houses and even a chimney or two ;<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A house near Manteigas, that of a forester receiving sixteen *vintens* a day from the State, consisted, for him and his family,



the church is of whitewash and granite. The village is in the shadow of the grey granite *Serra da Estrella* sheer above, and its sun sets early, but across a valley of fruit-trees, chestnuts and vines a red cone-shaped mountain holds the sun long after Manteigas is in a semi-darkness. To the right is the beautiful valley of the Zezere. It is a peaceful little town of peasants and shepherds. In the twilight before day, grey and brown-dressed men come silently from the dark doorways and go out to work in the valley or to fetch charcoal from the mountain; perhaps stopping at a tiny dark *venda* for a *copa* of *aguardente*, certainly pausing and taking off their hats as they pass a crucifix or a chapel on the way.

At four o'clock every morning, from May to October, a postman on horseback, or rather, guiding his horse up the steep mountain-path, leaves Manteigas with letters for Gouvea.<sup>1</sup> At half-past nine he trots into the narrow cobbled streets and past the grey granite churches and chapels of Gouvea with a great jingling of bells, sitting

of two rooms, one a kitchen, with floor partly of rough stone, partly of wood, a fire of immense logs burning on the ground; the other opening into it and containing some ornaments and photographs, a small table, a few chairs and a mattress in a corner on the floor. Walls and ceiling of both rooms were blackened with smoke from the chimneyless fire.

<sup>1</sup> Gouvea or Gouveia. From here a *carro* takes the letters to the railway station nearly ten miles distant.

erect on his packed *alforjes*, as though he had not just painfully crossed the highest mountain-range in Portugal. He is a quaint figure enough, all brown with a broad hat of light brown, and his rough leathern boots studded with great nails. He has but a single spur, of brass and huge, and his wooden box-stirrups are covered with a pattern of brass. He returns almost immediately to Manteigas, arriving there at about three of the afternoon. There is a road from Manteigas to Gouvea, but it winds and doubles so interminably along the *serra*, like a wriggling snake, that it seems to separate rather than connect the two villages. At the top of the *Serra da Estrella* are an observatory and a few houses. The view, especially from the ridge above Gouvea, is extensive and magnificent, of the dark undulating pinewoods and maize-fields of Beira Alta, of the lofty *Serra de Caramullo* beyond Bussaco, and of plain and *serras* blurred and mingling in a common mist of blue.

## CHAPTER XX

### THE CERCAL DE BUSSACO

Mil arvores estão ao ceo subindo.—CAMÕES.

(A thousand trees reach upward to the sky.)

Grim Bussaco's iron ridge.—SIR WALTER SCOTT.

**L**UZO or Luso is a little village of red-roofed houses half buried in trees and gardens —poplars, limes, oranges, and fruit-trees of many kinds. Trailing creepers hang heavily along walls and garden fences, and on hot days of summer the place is all scented with flowers, while, beyond, the plain mingles with the sky in a sea of blue. From Luzo a road of several *kilomètres* goes up to the enclosure of Bussaco and all that remains of the convent in which Wellington spent the night before the battle of the 27th of September, 1810. "But if he does I shall beat him," had been Wellington's words when fears were expressed that Masséna would not attack so strong a position. Masséna not only attacked but attacked too late, since, had he listened to Ney's wish, characteristically impetuous, to attack at once, he would have had far greater chances of success. The tiny cork-lined cells of the convent are now blocked up and only the little chapel remains. The little old

tower of this convent-chapel looks very quaint and austere in the midst of the florid white brilliance of the new Manueline hôtel. This hôtel gleams conspicuous in the centre of Bussaco's forest, its white tower surmounted by a Manueline armillary sphere, and surrounded by beautiful gardens of palms and flowers.

Could the old convent of the Carmelites be restored and the great and greatly admired Manueline building be destroyed, the charm of the place would be increased ; yet so steep is the hill and so dense the trees that in a few steps the hôtel disappears and is not to be seen though one stands immediately above it on the hill. The convent was begun in 1628 ; the *Padre geral* of the Carmelites who came to inspect the site is said to have exclaimed ; “ If uncultivated, rude and wild as it is we admire its beauty, when cultivated it will be an earthly paradise—se agora inculto, rude e tosco é o que admiramos, cultivado será um paraizo terreal.” But we still admire the splendid wildness and rude magnificence of the *Cercal* of Bussaco. A high wall of several *kilomètres* surrounds the enclosure, and here one may wander for hours in perfect freedom, and the gates remain open day and night.

Outside the gate of Coimbra are two inscriptions on the wall, both written in Portuguese. One of them, slightly worn, is the Bull of Pope Urban VIII., threatening with excommunication

those who should injure the trees of the enclosure: “QVerendo Nos quanto no Senhor podemos attender a conservaçam e retenção das Arvores do Convento de S. Cruz de Bussaco dos Carmelitas descalços do Bispado de Coimbra . . . Prohibimos sob pena de EXCOMUNHÃO ipso facto incorrenda que daqui em diante nenhuã pessoa de qualquer authoridade que seja se attreva sem licença expressa do Prior . . . entrar na Clauzura para effeito de cortar arvores de qualquer casta que sejaõ ou fazer outro dano: Não obstante quaes quer constituçoens apostolicas ou do Convento e Ordem dita emcontrario . . . Dada em Roma em S. Pedro sob o ainel do pescador em 28 de Marso de 1643. Anno 20 de nosso Pontificado—Wishing, in so far as we can in the Lord, to attend to the preservation and maintenance of the trees of the Convent of the Holy Cross of Bussaco belonging to the Barefooted Carmelites of the Diocese of Coimbra . . . We forbid under pain of excommunication, to be incurred in the act, that in future any person, of whatever authority he may be, should dare, without express permission of the Prior . . . to enter the enclosure for the purpose of cutting down trees, of whatever kind they may be, or doing other injury; notwithstanding any decrees apostolical or of the Convent and said Order to the contrary . . . Given at Rome in St. Peter’s with the fisherman’s ring on the 28th



of March, 1643, in the twentieth year of our Pontificate.)” The other inscription—they are side by side on the wall—is the Bull of Pope Gregory XV. in 1622, forbidding “that women, of whatever condition or estate, should have the boldness and presumption to enter the enclosure . . . under pain of the greater excommunication—p<sup>a</sup> q as m<sup>tes</sup> de q<sup>al</sup> q<sup>er</sup> estado ou cõdicaõ ã sejaõ senaõ atrevaõ ou prezumaõ trar . . . sob pena de excom<sup>ão</sup> major. A XXIII de Julio de MDCXXII.”

Opposite the gate of Coimbra, from a little terrace with stone seats set in the wall, there is a beautiful view of the immense plain, dark with pines, stretching away to the sea. Inside, not far from the gate, is a little chapel under a steep cliff of rock and foxgloves and broom, one of the many chapels or stations, *passos*, found at intervals in the enclosure, with their old *azulejos* and quaintly spelt, quaintly expressed inscriptions above the door. One has, for instance, the following inscription :

AQUI SE CONSIDERA A  
CAZA DE HERODES A  
ONDE XTÔ. S.N. FOI TI  
DO POR LOUCO, etc. ;

(“ Here is held meditation of the house of Herod, where Christ Our Lord was considered mad,” etc.)

Another has “ Aqui se concidera o Pretorio de Pilatos,” etc.

The hill of the Cercal is abrupt and conical, a pyramid of deep trees and brushwood. Here is a forest

ancient as the hills  
Enclosing sunny spots of greenery.

Here chasms slant

Down the green hill athwart a cedarn cover,

here are "beechen green and shadows numberless," as one wanders through the "verdurous glooms and winding mossy ways." On every side is an endless envelopment of branches, so that ground and sky are alike almost invisible; below and above and around, trees stretch impenetrable, and the ground is covered with trailing ivy, honeysuckle, carpets of ferns and luxuriant creeping undergrowth. So high and steep is the hill that from the narrow paths that go along it one looks down upon the tops of giant cedars and up at the roots of mighty oaks. Everywhere is a densest depth of green, the undergrowth trails and twines round the trunks of trees, and from leafy spaces beyond comes the cooing of doves. Or a nightingale sings as overhead the shadows deepen round the "dark-cluster'd trees," and below the last sunlight sends shafts and glades of quiet light along the ground and over a smooth bole here and there. The sunset sky appears through the trees cut into little globes of intense flame-coloured light, as though the branches were hung with a magic

splendour of myriad oranges. Probably nowhere in Europe are there so many cedars as at Bussaco, cedars and oaks cover the whole hill-side, and the trunks of some of the cedars are several yards in circumference. And here are giant fox-gloves, here are streams and moss-grown steps and ivied paths and deep green pools. Here on the hottest days of summer the air is cool, a wind rustles somewhere in the tree-tops far up the hill, and one may "wander in a forest thoughtlessly" while the village of Luzo below lies breathless in a mist of heat.

## CHAPTER XXI

### THE UNIVERSITY OF COIMBRA

N'uma mão a penna e n'outra a lança.—CAMÕES.

(One hand holding a pen, the other a lance.)

Oh Christ ! it is a goodly sight to see

What Heaven hath done for this delicious land !

What fruits of fragrance blush on every tree !

What goodly prospects o'er the hills expand !—BYRON.

Brandas veigas do Mondego.—ALMEIDA-GARRETT.

(Soft plains of the Mondego.)

**M**ONDEGO is the modern name of the ancient Munda, further lengthened out by the peasants to Mondeguinho, “the little Mondego,” where it flows a mere mountain stream from the *Serra da Estrella*. Near the villages of Cabras or Nellas or Carregal it flows already a river, clear green through hills of rock, and as it goes seaward through the province of Douro—the only river of the *Serra da Estrella* that reaches the sea—it receives many small tributaries hurrying green and white through magnificent clefts of rock and pine, and along narrow terraces of maize and olives. It is beautiful in all its course, but nowhere more beautiful than in the valley of Coimbra.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Pronounced Queenboro’.

Coimbra slopes up steeply from the river in storeys of white, dark-windowed houses, crowned by the University, the University's grey clock-tower topping the town. From the *Quinta das Lagrimas* or from the terrace of the Convent of Santa Clara across the river there are wonderfully beautiful views of the hill of houses—the compact mass of houses rising in many storeys to the sky, brown roofs and walls of glowing white with a smattering of grey and pink and yellow; above, to the right, the University, on the left the *Sé Nova* and *Paço Episcopal*,<sup>1</sup> and, lower, between them and in the very heart of the town, the splendid yellow-brown front of the twelfth-century Cathedral, the *Sé Velha*. A group of trees stands below the University and a few single ones among the houses here and there, scarcely breaking the long array of white buildings.

One may cross the Mondego in a barge opposite the *Choupal*, and from here one has an even fuller view of the University and of the gallery running round it. The water is green and exquisitely transparent; a pine-covered hill farther up stream across the line of the river seems to block its course, and along a white curve of sand carts drawn by dark-brown oxen are being loaded, and women wash clothes

<sup>1</sup> The Bishops of Coimbra have also the title of Count, *Conde de Arganil*.



from dawn to dusk, standing in the water. The pinks and blues and mauves, green and purple, blue, brown, yellow and red of their dresses, and the whirling white linen as it is beaten against the stones or dashed into the green water are like a picture by Rubens in the infinite wealth and variety of colour and movement. The thick avenues of poplar (*choupos*) of the *Choupal*, green from their roots but branching out more densely above, make pleasant shady walks along the river.

Perhaps the three most beautiful buildings of Coimbra are the *Sé Velha*, with its front of two great arches, one above the other, each with four pillars, of sculptured capitals, on either side; the *Mosteiro de Santa Cruz* with its 'Cloister of Silence,' the tombs of the first two Kings of Portugal<sup>1</sup> and the sculpture by João de Ruão;<sup>2</sup> and all that remains of the thirteenth-century Old Convent of Santa Clara or *da Rainha Santa Elizabeth*, on the opposite bank of the Mondego. The Convent itself has been destroyed long since by *cheias* or floods of the river, only the church remains, and this all sunken in the earth so that the beautiful capitals of some of its pillars are but a few feet from the ground, and of one pointed arch only the tip is visible, through which one may look into a black space of deep

<sup>1</sup> Afonso Henriques, 1139-1185. Sancho I., 1185-1211.

<sup>2</sup> Jean de Rouen.

water beneath the building. In a paved court in front of the arched entrance facing the river oxen were treading out broad beans from their shells, and the whole building is turned into a farm-stables, surely the most beautiful stables in existence, belonging to the owner of the *Quinta das Lagrimas*. The inside is very dark, and one stumbles against beautiful pillars and capitals, which there is scarcely sufficient light to examine, and between which the oxen have their stalls. Outside, the crops come up to the wall and the wall itself is largely covered with fig-trees, vines and maidenhair ferns, and many snapdragons grow in the beautiful rose-window. One of the entrances was called *Porta da Rosa*, owing to the famous miracle of roses in the days of King Diniz and Queen Elizabeth. The King, who had forbidden the Queen-Saint's continual charities, met her one day when her apron was filled with bread for the poor. To his question she answered with simple faith (or slight regard for truth) that her apron was filled with roses, and when the apron was opened it was found indeed to contain nothing but roses. The New Convent of Santa Clara contains a painted wooden panel which shows the Queen leaning on a black stick and distributing red roses to beggars.

Not far from these lovely stables is the *Quinta das Lagrimas*. Here the *Fonte dos Amores*, a clear spring, wells from beneath a plant-grown

rock, the water then flowing through a stone channel, in the form of a rough cross, to a green stagnant pond. Here, on a stone, are carved the lines of Camões :—

As filhas do Mondego a morte escura  
 Largo tempo chorando memoraram,  
 E por memoria eterna em fonte pura  
 As lagrimas choradas transformaram ;  
 O nome lhe puzeram, que inda dura,  
 Dos amores de Ignez que alli passaram :  
 Vêde que fresca fonte rega as flores,  
 Que lagrimas são a agua e o nome amores.

—*Lusiads*, iii. 135.

(The daughters of Mondego long with tears  
 Of her dark death kept fresh the memory,  
 And, that remembrance might outlive the years,  
 Of tears thus shed a crystal spring supply ;  
 The name they gave it then even now it bears,  
 The love of Ignez there to signify ;  
 How clear a spring the flowers from above  
 Waters—in tears it flows, its name is love.)

For here Ignez de Castro was murdered,<sup>1</sup> and a sinister red still stains a part of the stone channel beneath the transparent water. It is a place of cool shade, with maidenhair ferns and the sound of flowing water, beneath great cypresses.

Immediately above the old convent of Santa Clara the new convent stands, far out of the reach of river *cheias*. It is a huge building of brown-yellow stone. The sisters were expelled in 1910 by the Republic, to the lasting grief of the old *sacristão*, who repeats that “ they did

<sup>1</sup> See Chapter XV.

nothing but good—nothing but good,” and, receiving a salary not from the State but from the still existing *Real Confraria* of the convent, keeps the light ever burning before the coffin of the Queen-founder of the original convent, Saint Elizabeth.

It is no wonder that the Portuguese students in after life do not lose their affection for Coimbra and the *saudosos campos do Mondego*,<sup>1</sup> the river of the Muses. Coimbra might be, and partly is, a town *de buen ayre e de fermosas salidas*,<sup>2</sup> as Alfonso the Learned recommended that a university town should be—“of good air and fair outgoings”; but water is allowed to stagnate pestilentially with heaps of rubbish on the other side of the river, beyond a plantation of oranges, and also near the bridge where the women wash clothes. Streets of poverty-stricken houses and long, narrow stairways of stone steps ascend from the river to the University. Women with boat-shaped baskets

<sup>1</sup> Camões.

<sup>2</sup> De buen ayre e de fermosas salidas deve ser la villa do quisieren establecer el estudio, porque los maestros que muestran los saberes e los escolares que aprenden vivan sanos en el e puedan folgar e recibir plazer en la tarde, quando se levantaren cansados del estudio.—*Las Siete Partidas* (*De Los Estudios*).

(Of good air and fair approaches must be the town where a university is founded, that the masters who set forth learning and the scholars who receive it may live there in good health, and may have relaxation and delight of an afternoon when they rise weary from their studies.)

of fruit on their heads go up the steep cobbled streets, or carry two-handled *bilhas* and *cantaros* from the *chafariz* below the *Sé Velha*.

If the heat of the day is overwhelming the *Bibliotheca* in the quadrangle of the University offers a cool retreat, since it is open in summer as in winter from ten A.M. to three P.M. It has the remote ancient air and cloistered peace of the Bodleian. The books are brought quickly and in any number, and there is a convenient catalogue, consisting of little books of manuscript slips, roughly bound together, like tailors' patterns.

From the court of the University, close to the entrance of the Library, there is a view of the fruitful valley of the Mondego and of the hills beyond, which is one of the most beautiful views in Portugal, and that is not saying little, in this land of 'goodly prospects.' To the right of Coimbra grey *São Bento*, the yellow-washed *Penitenciaria*, the white, deserted convent of the *Ursulinos* and the *Seminario* stand on the hill-side, and beyond, pine-covered hills stretch away to the faint blue *Serra de Louzã*; below is the lovely curve of the Mondego, in its wide, sandy bed, flowing through hills and flats of olives and oranges, vines and maize and poplars. To the left of Coimbra the little distant village of Simide is perched high between the crests of two hills of pines, showing barely the white



tower of its church. The beauty of the whole scene is impossible to describe, due partly to the lovely formation of the hills and the bend of the river, partly to the many variegated greens of plain and hill, the green of fir and poplar, pine and palm, eucalyptus, orange and olive.

The University of Coimbra has a charm and fascination which perhaps only that of Oxford now, and Salamanca of old could excel. For apart from the quaintness of its streets, the beauty of its ancient buildings and the loveliness of the surrounding country, it has for the Portuguese student a thousand reminiscences and attractions. It is the only university of Portugal, a bond of union between all learning, and it has ever been the inspiration of Portuguese poets. Camões studied here; Almeida-Garrett, the chief Portuguese poet of the nineteenth century, as a student recited more than one poem in the great *Sala das Actas*; and a third poet, Francisco de Sá de Miranda, was born at Coimbra. The students, in frock-coats and flowing gowns, are some of them neatly dressed and some completely in tatters, their vanity clearly showing through the holes of their coats; they go bareheaded even in the days of fiercest sun, but often carry umbrellas, which they do not use; it is no longer the fashion to wear or even to possess the academic cap or *gorro*. Apart from attendance at lectures, examinations,

etc., the students are entirely free ; sometimes they live alone in rooms, more often they join together, ten or twelve at the most, and form little communities known as *republicas*.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the custom of certain small Basque villages in the eighteenth century to style themselves *repúblicas*. On the other hand, some small villages—*e.g.* Vidania in Guipúzcoa—are called *universidades*, universities.

## CHAPTER XXII

### OPORTO

Em espaço breve  
Chega ao mar o Douro,  
Os cabellos de ouro  
Se fazem de neve.

—FRANCISCO DE SÁ E MENESES.

(Swift to the sea and bold  
The river Douro's flow,  
But then to locks of snow  
Change its locks of gold.)

Como sobre um circo convertido em naumachia o Porto ergue-se em amphitheatro sobre o esteiro do Douro e reclinase no seu leito de granito.—ALEXANDRE HERCULANO.

(As above a circus prepared for a mock sea-fight, Oporto rises in amphitheatre above the channel of the Douro and reposes in a bed of granite.)

**B**ETWEEN Aveiro and Oporto lie the *alagadiços* of the river Vouga (flowing from the Serra da Lapa) and the *ria* of Aveiro, strange gloomy flats and marshlands along the sea. Here are backwaters covered with water-lilies, sand-rimmed lagoons and sluggish channels or *esteiros*, along which the fishing-boats go out to sea, their white sails giving an impression of Holland as they creep in

invisible boats across the swampy plain of dull green and brown, with bright green reed-like rice-fields. The summer heat in these swamps and in the little villages of Angeja, Canellas, or Estarreja is oppressive and terrible; the sun beats down with overwhelming force, ripening the rice and rapidly forming mounds of salt in the *marinhas* of Aveiro. It is only at Ovar that one comes to beautiful white sand-dunes and a clear blue sea, and at Esmoriz and Espinho pine-woods grow by the sea across the sand-dunes.

Oporto itself has a somewhat dingy air. Its streets and houses are blackened with smoke and coal, a blackening so different from the mellow effects of the smoke of wood and twig kitchen-fires in the farms and villages. And the dinginess shows more gloomily under the brilliant light of Portugal than in a less sunny climate.

From the high conspicuous *Torre dos Clerigos* one has an excellent view of the red roofs and of the factory chimneys of the city, and, immediately below, a glimpse of its busy life in the *Mercado do Anjo*, a curious crowded market-place of corrugated iron sheds (or tiled, with little skylights) at the side of a wide court roughly paved with slabs of stone. And, indeed, the interest of Oporto is not in its buildings, not even in its splendid gardens, the *Jardim da Cordoaria*, the

*Crystal Palace*, the *Jardim de São Lazaro* with its great circle of magnolias, but rather in the life of its steep streets and quays and river, in the goldsmiths' shops (*ourivesarias*), the curiously carved high *cangas* of the ox-carts, the wooden slippers or *socos*, the barrel-like *canecas*<sup>1</sup> narrowing at the top and strengthened with iron bands, the crowd of idle loafers and the busy crowd of toilers.

The most peculiar and murkiest part of the town is that around and immediately below the Cathedral. The *Sé* itself has a beautiful cloister (the more beautiful from the ugliness of the surroundings through which one must pass to the Cathedral) surrounding a court, the pavement of which is formed of nameless tombs, each with its number. To the cool interior of the *Sé* the heat does not penetrate, although through the open door appears the glazed sky and a valley and hill of brown and grey walls and red roofs in a haze of heat. Steep dingy coal-tinged streets and *travessas* a few feet wide, with tiny dark shops and heaps of rubbish, flat-slabbed uneven *largos* and gloomy courts surround the Cathedral in this the most ancient and quaintest part of Oporto. A long flight of broken stone steps leads down a

<sup>1</sup> These wooden *canecas*, used for carrying water on the head instead of earthenware *bilhas*, are of the same kind as the *ferradas* of Asturias, but far less beautiful. The *ferrada* is of more graceful shape, and its three broad bands of iron are brightly polished, so that it gleams like silver.



cliff of rock from the Cathedral, tall houses rising out of the rock, and, below this, steep cobbled streets fall riverwards.

On an abrupt hill of rock above the river stands the *Seminario* under which, from the Convent (now *quartel*) of *Nossa Senhora da Serra do Pilar* Wellington effected his marvellous passage of the Douro on the 11th of May, 1809, when his habitual calculating prudence seemed to have given way to a reckless and foolhardy daring. The quiet coldness of his words, "Well, let the men cross," was, however, characteristic as he gave the order by which twenty-five British soldiers were to find themselves on the right bank of the Douro in the face of the whole army of Soult, only a single boat being available for the passage. Of the low round tower of the *Quartel da Serra do Pilar* a strange and beautiful view is to be seen from near the *Praça da Batalha*, for across a garden of limes and oranges and palms, across quaint grey-balconied houses, deep little verandahs and old yellow walls, the tower looks but a few yards away, the Douro entirely obliterated in its deep gorge.

It is from the high bridge of Dom Luiz I. that one may best realize how deep and steep the gorge is, and the immense difficulty of throwing an army across the river. The right bank beneath the *Passeio das Fontainhas*, between

the *seminario* and the bridge, is of rock rising abruptly to a height of many feet (the bridge itself is little under 200 feet high). Yet it is for the most part covered with houses and spaces of green in a motley disarray, as though fig-trees and plots of vegetables, vine-trellises and orange-trees, walls and stone steps and houses, brown roofs and red roofs, had clambered up in a fierce struggle to secure a permanent foothold, at whatever level or angle, in the precipitous rock. Opposite are the low red or white or yellow wine *armazens* of Villa Nova de Gaia, often hollowed in the granite of the hill-side. The *Caes da Ribeira* to the right of the bridge is as crowded with boats as the raft of an Oxford barge in Eights Week. Along its steps women stand perpetually washing clothes, while ox-carts pass to and fro in the street above. On the further side is a long row of little round-arched shops, and in the street stalls (as seen from the bridge far above) display tiny squares of indistinguishable fruits, green, gold, red and brown.

The river, here dull green and sullen, is a moving picture of many boats—small steam tugs and slow laden barges (one rowed by twelve white-kerchiefed women standing); long *caycos*, thin and curved as a crescent of moon but a few days old; square-prowed little fishing-boats, *savoeiros* or *saveiros*; the heavier *barcos ravello* or *rabello*, which bring the wine from the region round

Regoa<sup>1</sup> far upstream, making a difficult descent of the rocky impetuous Douro. Beyond the *Caes da Ribeira* Oporto juts out (by the church of *São Francisco*) in a bend of the river opposite the *Praia do Estaleiro*, a bend corresponding to that, a little further upstream, under cover of which Wellington was able to throw his troops across.

<sup>1</sup> The month of the vintage is September and the beginning of October, although Camões says that—

No mez de Agosto  
Baccho das uvas tira o doce mosto ;

(In the month of August, Bacchus draws forth the sweet juice of the grape.)

Grapes are sold in the markets as early as July. The wine undergoes a further process of two years' preparation in the cellars of Oporto.

## CHAPTER XXIII

### THE PROVINCE OF MINHO

Εὐδαίμων τε ἔστι καὶ ποταμοῖς μεγάλοις διαρρεῖται καὶ μικροῖς.

—STRABO, *of Portugal*.

(And it is fertile, and is crossed by many rivers, small and great.)

Como são brancas as flôres  
D'este verde jasminal !  
Recorda a sua fragancia  
Perfumes de um laranjal ;  
Mas têm mais suave aroma  
As rosas de Portugal.

—FRANCISCO GOMES DE AMORIM (1827-1892).

(How white the flower of this green jessamine ! Its fragrance recalls an orange-grove in flower ; but sweeter is the scent of the roses of Portugal.)

THE country from Oporto to Villa do Conde, with its miles of ruinous aqueduct, and Pova de Varzim, a town of low white houses on a shadeless shore close to the frontier of Minho, has an almost Northern air. For here are pines and bracken and foxgloves, deep, flowered hedges, alder-shaded streams. The heat however, in summer is very great, and in the breathless air the blue smoke rises slowly from the brown roofs of villages in vines and maize : Crestins, Pedras Rubas, Villar do Pinheiro,

Modivas, Mindello,<sup>1</sup> Azurara. Here the stream Leça flows to the sea at Mattosinhos.<sup>2</sup> The praises of the little river Leça have been sung by many poets, by none more pleasantly than by Francisco de Sá e Meneses (1515-1584).

Oh rio Leça  
 Como corres manso !  
 Se eu tiver descanso  
 Em ti se começa !<sup>3</sup>  
 . . . . .  
 Por ti cantam aves,  
 Sem temerem quedas,  
 Mil cantigas ledas  
 E versos suaves.  
 . . . . .  
 Por ti canta Abril  
 Quanto cuida e sonha,  
 Ora com sanfonha,  
 Ora com rabil.  
  
 (O river Leça,  
 So gently flowing,  
 Had I rest from care  
 'Twere of thy bestowing.  
  
 For thee sing the birds,  
 Careless of all ill,  
 Many a joyous song,  
 Many a softest trill.  
  
 All his hopes and dreams  
 For thee April sings,  
 Now on rustic pipe,  
 Now with lyre-strings.)

<sup>1</sup> Almeida-Garrett landed here to fight as a private soldier for King Pedro on behalf of his daughter, Dona Maria II. da Gloria.

<sup>2</sup> Mattosinhos has a crucifix which miraculously floated thither from Joppa in the year 117.

<sup>3</sup> This verse is ascribed to João Rodrigues de Sá by Theophilo



The first river of the province of Minho is the Cavado, whose transparent waters, flowing from the *Serra de Larouco*, reach white sand-dunes and the sea between the villages of Fão and Espozende. The small holdings of Minho are evident in the numerous walls of loose stones or upright slabs or granite posts connected by wire. The farms are built so low that their entrance is sometimes entirely hidden in velvet-black depths of vine-trellis as high as the house and supported on rough posts of granite. Women are at work in the maize, wearing white straw hats, scarlet skirts and fringed shawls of green or yellow, tied as crossovers. A slow ox-cart passes, drawn by brown oxen, their tall yoke or *canga* of wood intricately and beautifully carved; the *boeirinha*<sup>1</sup> in red and yellow with large gold earrings walking in front, her *aguilhada* (goad) thrice her own height. Girls equally small keep cows by the roadside; women pass with huge loads of vegetables, wood, fir-cones, trefoil or maize-leaves on their heads, or in the early morning go out to work in the fields, carrying brown-red *bilhas* and long-handled gleaming mattocks. It is most rare

Braga (Camões, *Epoca e vida*. Porto, 1907, p. 436), who quotes it as follows (from the quotation by Frei Manoel da Esperança):—

Oh rio de Leça  
 Como corres manso !  
 Se eu tiver descanso  
 Em ti começa !

<sup>1</sup> *Boeiro* = French *bouvier*. *Boeirinha* is the feminine diminutive.

here as elsewhere in Portugal to see the peasant women empty-handed, or rather empty-headed. On their heads they carry, if they have no load, their umbrella or pair of clogs, but more often they have on their head a burden of incredible size and weight, a large table or a donkey's double panniers or a long thick bar of iron or their more usual load of large heavy baskets; and this not for a short distance only or on level ground, but for many miles and over steep, cobbled streets and mountain paths.

To see the dress of the women of Minho at its best one must go to Vianna do Castello and to the villages near Vianna. The road from Espozende coasts the shore of undulating sand-dunes and many pinewoods. Vianna, midway between the river Minho and the river Cavado, has its own river, the Lima, the *manso Lima*, the *saudoso, brando e claro Lima* of Diogo Bernardez. The Lima flows through an immensely wide bed of sand and beneath dark *serras* from the *Serra de São Mamede* in Alto Alemtejo, and Vianna has a beautiful position at its mouth, protected on the north by a pine-covered *serra*. Here many sailing-boats take in loads of pinewood and other cargos, and here too is a busy traffic of *diligencias*. The *carros de correio* are not small and light as in the south, but large unwieldy conveyances drawn by three or four horses, and carrying at a pinch, for some great market of a

village in the hills, twenty or more travellers. Letters are given to the coachman, and, if at any house on the way an inquiry is made for a letter, he pulls them from his pocket and hands them to one of the travellers to look through, who does it leisurely, spelling out the names.

A market at the village of Lanheze, some ten miles from Vianna, is a most strange and fascinating sight, owing to the dress and ornaments worn by the women, here seen in all their splendour. The skirt is usually of grey or some faded colour, worn short and full, with a band of black, often of velvet, half a foot wide, round the edge. A white shirt or blouse appears only at the arms and in a line at the waist, and over this is worn a close-fitting bodice of a black stiff material immediately above the waist for about six inches, a line of gold or silver or bright-coloured braid dividing it from the upper part, which is of a less stiff and brighter stuff, and passes over the shoulders in bands a few inches wide. Over this again a large handkerchief, usually of yellow or red, is worn round the neck and tied crossover-fashion about the waist, while another bright large-flowered handkerchief flows far down the back from the head, and is tied on the forehead in two long ends, like horns. Moreover, even on the hottest days, some of the women wear a heavy apron of black velvet, ornamented with

beads and edged with fur. The general effect, all gold and red, of the upper part of their dress is most weird and beautiful. The colours, though bright, are less vivid than those to be seen round Elvas, being of less simple hue; and it is noticeable that, when red and yellow are abandoned, the handkerchiefs and bodice are often chosen in different shades of the same colour, green or blue or purple.

But the dress of the women of Minho pales into insignificance before their ornaments of gold. Gold earrings sometimes three times the size of the ear, six or seven rounds of large-beaded necklaces of gold, thinner gold chains fold upon fold, with many pendants, crosses, hearts and various ornaments, which from their massive solidity one may not call trinkets, crowd together so that some of the women are entirely sheathed in gold from neck to waist and weighed down by half of the contents of an *ourivesaria* of Oporto's *Rua das Flôres*.

The price of a pair of very ordinary plain hoop-shaped earrings (*brincos* or *pendentes*) is about five *milreis*, but others must be five and six times as expensive, and some of the chains (*correntes*) are valued at as much as fifty *milreis*. All the ornaments, moreover, of real though perhaps not very fine gold, are thick and heavy, and many of them curiously worked, so that it is strange to see these gilt peasant-women barefoot, chaffering over the price of a lettuce or



a chicken. The market of Lanheze is held in a crowded space (of which a part is occupied by hundreds of iron-grey *bilhas* for sale) on either side of the main road, so that one has a view of massed gold and brilliant colours which is truly marvellous and not easily forgotten. The thick-whiskered men with small black hats, wide black sashes, short brown jackets ornamented with braid and buttons of mother-of-pearl, set the dress of the women in sharp relief. Even small girls are often arrayed in massive earrings and necklaces of gold, so that it would appear that they are not merely family heirlooms handed down from mother to daughter; but no doubt many cheap imitations are to be bought at the village fairs.

The women are nearly always barefoot or go slowly clog-clog in *socos*, a kind of slipper or smaller *sabot* (*tamanco*) without heel, made of leather, adorned with a pattern and a black bow and brass-headed nails, with soles of wood. In Algarve they are called *chocos*, *cholocas* or *cloques* (clogs); along the Spanish frontier of Traz-os-Montes they are *cholos*; unwritten onomatopœic names that vary from province to province.

The *minhotos* have a great love of whitewash, even the tiled roofs of some houses and churches are covered with white, giving, with the granite, a white and grey look to the villages. Thin granite pillars some twelve feet high are surmounted by small crosses, and niches, also of



granite, contain rude crucifixions in *azulejos* or roughly painted, with half a dozen figures below in flames saying: "You who go by remember our sorrows," "*Lembraivos de nós*," or "Alms for the blessed souls." The *minhoto* is pious to the verge of superstition. He would not willingly pass any of these crucifixions without crossing himself or muttering a prayer; and, if asked what are the *porborinhos*,<sup>1</sup> will answer very seriously with a kind of fearfulness, that they are "those who go in the air," spirits that wander between Hell and Heaven.

Many are the picturesque expressions to be gathered in the Minho, which at once fascinates the stranger by its ancient individual character as much as by the perennial freshness of its fields and hills. Thus the wolf, frequent here as in the *charnecas* of Alemtejo, is "he of the ready-made coat—*o da roupa feita* "; matches (wooden) are "little light-sticks, *palitos de lume*"—you will be told that only those who give themselves airs—*algum fidalgo*—call them *phosphoros*, *phosphoro* here meaning a gun-cap. The maize-bread or *broa*,<sup>2</sup> the ox-carts with their *cangas*, the

<sup>1</sup> Properly *borborinhos*, diminutive of *borboro*, which is the same word as 'murmur,' the murmur of the forest having become a spirit. Cf. Teixeira de Pascoaes, *As Sombras* (1907), p. 36 :

um murmurio fundo

De tórvo borborinho.

and p. 27 : Erravam no ar Demonios, Borborinhos.

<sup>2</sup> *Borona*, *borôa*, *b'rôa*, *broa*. The word is to be found spelt in all these ways.

*coroças* worn by the men in winter, are but a few of the many peculiarities of the province. Those who know the heavy yellow maize-bread, *artoa*, of the Basques, the equally yellow, equally heavy *borona* of Asturias and *broa* of Beira Baixa, are surprised to find the *broa* of Minho almost white. “*Não sabem fazer pão de milho*—they do not know how to make maize-bread,” say the *minhotos* of those further south; here it is made of maize-grains so white that they are even surreptitiously mixed (as being cheaper) with wheat to make *pão de trigo*. The maize-bread is of two kinds, one very sour, mixed with a large proportion of rye, the other excellent.

The *cangas* (*jogos*, yokes), first seen at Oporto, are the pride of the peasants of the north. They are sometimes about two feet high, a fringe of hair running along the top, with an open-work pattern of little arches, every inch of the wood between being carved with great skill. They are bought in the towns, Oporto, Guimarães, etc., and cost from three to five *milreis*, which seems little enough when one considers the immense amount of work bestowed upon them.<sup>1</sup> Thin and set erect on the oxen's necks the *canga* gives an impression of great discomfort; the oxen suffer in order to be beautiful, and are cheered by the monotonous “singing” (*cantar* or *chiar*, the

<sup>1</sup> There are also a good many carts of single oxen, the poles then passing through the *canga* at either end.

*chirriar* of the Spanish-Basque provinces) of the cartwheels. On the tightening of a huge screw in the axles the singing begins, a sound as of many threshing-machines at work, with an almost human lamentation of groaning. Some *kilomètres* away this is tolerable, even pleasant, but near at hand it becomes after a time almost unendurable; the peasant walks placidly at the side of his cart or lies jolting upon it, and says that "it is beautiful when the wheels sing well, and the oxen like it—*Quando cantam bem é muito bonito, e os bois gostam.*" It also frightens away wolves, and malignant spirits, and the Devil.

In Traz-os-Montes the *cangas* are replaced by the softer, comfortable *mulhelhas*. The *mulhelhas* consist for each ox of a small pad of red flannel or of leather along the forehead, bound at intervals with little thongs of leather, and above this, between the horns, is a fat cushion of leather, filled with wool, the leather continuing over the neck to support a small yoke of wood.<sup>1</sup> A pair of *mulhelhas* costs a *libra*, being more expensive than the ordinary *canga*. The outlay necessary for the possession of an ox-cart is, indeed, considerable. The cart itself, wishing-bone-shaped, with small holes along the side for rough sticks (to which the load is tied, or on which, when the cart is empty, the peasant hangs

<sup>1</sup> On both sides of the Northern frontier of Traz-os-Montes the *mulhelhas* are replaced by simple, untanned goat-skins.

his *socos*), is of pine or corkwood or oak, and may cost twenty *milreis* ; the pair of oxen from twenty-five to thirty *libras*. The *libra* (or *soberano*) is the English pound sterling, and, curiously enough, the cattle at the markets are always bought and sold in *libras*. The recognized price of the *libra* is 4500 *réis*, four and a half *milreis*, but it varies with the exchange (always given in the newspapers) ; so that, when the bargain is concluded, a long process of mathematics is required in order to reduce the stipulated sum to *réis*.

In summer the peculiar capes of reeds worn by the *minhoto* peasants are nowhere to be seen. These *coroças*, *c'roças*, *crossas* (or *corças*, as many of the peasants call them) are bought in winter at the village fairs and cost from eighteen *vintens* to four or five *tostões*. They are impenetrable to rain, of a faded yellow-grey colour, and reach to the feet, with a second cape about the shoulders. In Traz-os-Montes, land of many rye-fields, the *coroças* are replaced by *palhoças*, similar capes bought cheap at the winter fairs, but made of straw, *palha de centeio*. Peculiar to the *Serra do Barroso* (near Cabeceiras) is the *capucha*, or hood, worn by the women in winter, made, however, not of reeds or straw but of wool or serge.

On the road from Vianna to Ponte do Lima may be seen many beautiful little *quintas*, set in orange-trees and fruit-trees of many kinds, vines



and long lines of blue hydrangeas ; the maize-fields are surrounded by vines on granite posts, and the verandahs beneath the wide eaves of the houses are likewise supported from the eaves by rough posts of granite. The houses of Ponte do Lima, lying on the river Lima in a great circle of hills, are mostly built of massive blocks of granite, some of them with coats-of-arms. From here a road of thirty *kilomètres* goes to Braga through treeless brackened hills, with a scent of Cumberland moors, and hills of tall pines across and through which appear more distant mountain-ranges of a faint and exquisite blue.

Prado, on the Cavado, is a small village of low dark-doored houses round a common under oak-trees. The valley is beautiful, the river flowing through pine-covered hills and beneath banks of alder and vine-grown poplars, with islands of white sand lit up and coloured in the setting sun. The vines in many parts of Minho grow over fruit-trees of every kind, even oranges and olives, and over oaks, poplars, etc., and are sometimes festooned from tree to tree ; the vines flourish, and the fruit-trees, although occasionally throttled, also as a rule yield their fruit.

On summer evenings at Prado bright-kerchiefed women sit in the doorways or carry *bilhas* of water through the darkening streets. Braga, a league away, is on a hill surrounded by pine-covered hills and fainter blue mountains.



Its long *Rua da Boa Vista* going up sheerly from the plain is one of the steepest of the steep streets of Portugal. The town is very picturesque, with its houses washed red and mauve and white and yellow, its irregular brown roofs, its Cathedral and many ancient church towers; all intermingled with fruit-trees and vines, a great vine sometimes clambering all along a brown-tiled roof. Braga is the capital of Minho, and only grudgingly yields to Coimbra the place of third city of Portugal, after Lisbon and Oporto. The Archbishop of Braga still has the title of Primate of the Spains, *Primaz das Hespanhas*. On all sides from the central *praça* descend long streets of houses, many-coloured and picturesquely irregular, red and brown, pink and yellow; sometimes the sides of the houses are entirely tiled, like roofs, or covered with blue or green or yellow *azulejos*.

The hundred *kilomètres* of road <sup>1</sup> from Braga to Villa Pouca de Aguiar, in Traz-os-Montes, are full of beauty and interest. The road glints in myriad facets from the dust of granite; seven *kilomètres* from Braga it cuts along steep brackened hills (called the *Serra do Carvalho*, although oaks are rare), and granite posts are set along the precipitous hillside. From this terrace, where a stone seat near a fountain is shaded by cool acacia-trees, there is a view of an

<sup>1</sup> Without dust or mud, and excellent for motoring.

immense dark valley far below, of pines and chestnuts and small fringed squares that are maize-fields surrounded by rows of vine-covered trees. Little parishes or *freguezias* here and there have their churches half-hidden in trees; on one side the Cavado flows across the valley with curves and angles of white sand, and the valley is bounded by endless lines of mountains, range upon range, blue and faintest grey, long slopes, sharp crags and rounded peaks, the fore-runners of the *Serra do Gerez*. On a summer day in a *calma* the whole valley seems silent and asleep, except for the hours striking, or a deep-toned bell ringing from some hidden church tower. By the road is a chirping of crickets and the welcome sound of running water; butterflies hover lazily and great green lizards take the sun by the posts of granite.

In the *Serra da Cabreira* and the *Serra do Barroso* before Cabeceiras the houses are of grey granite, huge almost Cyclopean blocks that recall the mighty walls of Tarragona. They are placed one upon the other without cement; four or five may suffice for the entire height of the house, four of them make a black square hole that is the glassless, frameless window. The building appears to be delightfully simple, if, that is, the builders are giants;<sup>1</sup> the blocks are,

<sup>1</sup> In one of these villages a house of massive granite blocks was building, the blocks being slowly rolled up along two rough pine trunks.

however, sometimes of no great thickness, occasionally six inches only. The houses of these villages, Rosas, for instance, have a massive look of eternity, but their greyness of granite blocks is relieved by gardens bright with monkshood and flags and dahlias—hollyhocks, roses, hydrangeas and masses of hanging ivy geranium and other trailing flowers, with carnations along the granite ledges under the windows.

And, as the houses grow greyer, the men break out into the brighter colours of the mountain (the women wearing bright colours here as elsewhere). Their sashes, indeed, are black and worn very broad, but their sandals are of bright reds or blues or purples, and the soft felt hats change from small and black to large and brown or green. They have, too, brilliant handkerchiefs and neckties, but especially are their waistcoats an evident delight. The more sober-minded wear them black or brown in front with the back of crimson flannel; but the gayer add to the crimson flannel at the back a front of crimson plush, across which hang several lines of thin silver chains. Their coats are thrown over the arm, and they all carry plain stout sticks cut from the mountain-side, and nearly as tall as themselves, though most of them are tall.

On the side of the *serra* it is not always easy to distinguish a village of grey granite houses and brown-smoked roofs. The houses are all

chimneyless, and the smoke, instead of going up in thin lines, comes in puffs from the upper windows or hangs in a little blue cloud over the roof. Beautiful little groups of brown-roofed houses, often half-hidden in trees, hang, as it were, by their teeth to the mountain-side ; sometimes a whole house is supported above the steep rock on tall thin posts of granite.

The road goes on through interminable lovely *serras*, the Ave below, little more than a mountain stream, flowing from the *Serra da Cabreira* in transparent pools and white rushing falls. Beyond the small village of Rosas one looks back across hills of tall pines to a lovely view of many *serras*, blue-grey, faint and distant, but with each outline clearly pencilled one below the other and against the sky ; nearer, the hills are crowned with huge boulders of granite, and low walls are built of massive granite blocks. The country, in spite of all its granite, is green and peaceful, and crystal rillels and streams of delicious icy water flow even in the height of summer. The peasants have the clear-eyed, smiling faces of the mountain. On cloudless mornings, when the sun has not yet risen or is still mercifully hidden behind a hill of pines, they are already at work, silent in the maize, and the only sound to be heard is that of the singing of birds and the distant "singing" of ox-carts. And at evening there is an even deeper peace

as some calm valley-stream flowing between vine-decked trees reflects the burnished gold-flame of the sunset sky. Here a single cypress towers darkly above the deep-brown roofs of a farm, there a white church, granite-edged, stands solitary among pine-trees. Cabeceiras de Basto is a village round a common of trees, with an old convent, and from Cabeceiras the road goes down to the Tamega, which divides Minho from Traz-os-Montes, rushing *coroça*-coloured in a deep rocky ravine.



## CHAPTER XXIV

### A WAYSIDE INN

Já vem vindo a noite, é tam só a estrada,  
Senhor pae, não digam tal da nossa casa  
Que a um cavalleiro que pede pousada  
Se fecha esta porta á noite cerrada.—*Romance.*

(But now the night is coming, and so lonely is the way,  
Sir Father, of our house let no one say  
That to a knight who begs a lodging on the road  
Our door is closed when night has fallen on the day.)

THE road winds up and up interminably from the Tamega along the Ribeira da Pena, through rocky breathless hollows of crushing heat. Against the rock of the hill-side a great *venda* stands solitary. A stairway of granite steps leads up the wall on the outside to the principal room of the house, kitchen and dining- and sitting-room in one. The floor is of rough wood, with a wide space of granite raised three or four inches from the floor for the hearth or *lareira*, against great boulders of granite forming part of the wall, which is smoke-blackened to the roof. Near this great fire-place is a small round granite oven for baking maize and rye-bread, and along either side of it are solid high-backed wooden benches, called *escanços*, *dormitorios* or *preguiceiros* (where

one may sleep or *preguiçar*, sit idle). There is a rhyme :—

O fumo vae p'r' o seu lugar,  
Quem é preguiçeiro  
Deixa-s'estar.

The word for lazy is, however, *preguiçoso*, and, perhaps, it should be “*Quem é no preguiçeiro*”: “The smoke goes to its own place and he who is on the lazy-bench lets himself be.” This is said as the smoke, instead of creeping up the blackened wall, as a well-conducted smoke should, pours out in thick gusts through the house. In the south, chimneys are everywhere conspicuous, but in the north, and especially in the *serras*, where fierce wintry weather often sends men crowding round the *lareira*, a chimney is extremely rare. In summer the door can be kept open, in winter the smoke is “more irksome, *um pouco peior*,” as a peasant said.

In winter especially the *lareira* becomes a gathering-place where laughter and song, legends and wise saws and proverbs find their natural expression. Scented hill-plants crackle and great logs smoulder, supported on a large stone called in Traz-os-Montes *trefegueiro*,<sup>1</sup> (? also *estafegueiro*), and a string of sausages (called *larcirada*) hangs smoking above the fire. This solitary inn of Ribeira da Pena had a true witches' kitchen.

<sup>1</sup> The word *trefegueiro* is transferred from the stone to those who shiveringly hug the fire.

A huge caldron (*caldeira*) was suspended over the fire, and little black three-legged *potes* stood among the ashes. A distaff leant against the wall in a dark corner, in another a large cat was apparently sleeping, but no doubt watching that the caldron should not boil over, while a medley of rabbits, chickens and many strange vessels, small jugs and huge *cantaros* of tin and earthenware,<sup>1</sup> increased this *Hexenhausrat*. Along the walls hung or stood *focinhos* (sickles) and *bassureiros*<sup>2</sup> of *giesta*.

A storm was passing across the *serra*, and the kitchen was in darkness, except when the fire of twigs and whin broke into a momentary flame or the wind whirled open the door. Through the chinks of the roof (and ceiling) large hail-stones came rattling, till the floor was white and the fire sizzled. Sitting on a chair at the entrance of his house above the steps, a large felt hat (brown with red lining) on his head, the old inn-keeper conversed with his guests and lamented the time when his inn was crowded and many a *carro* and *almocreve*<sup>3</sup> passed along the road, now more deserted on account of the *comboio*<sup>4</sup> from Braga to Villa Real, which swallows the traffic.

<sup>1</sup> In Traz-os-Montes these are called *cantaros*, the *bilha* there being a small jug, with spout and handle, painted over with flowers.

<sup>2</sup> Brooms (lit. rubbishers) of broom. In some parts of Traz-os-Montes the word for the plant broom (usually *giesta*) is said to be *escova* (broom, *i.e.* brush).

<sup>3</sup> Carrier, Span. *arriero*.

<sup>4</sup> Train. *Trem* means a hired carriage.

His wife, handsome, white-haired, with large golden hoop-earrings, was busy about the fire, throwing handfuls of *feijões* (beans) into the *caldeira*.

The walls, inside as out, are of massive uncemented granite ; the little square windows of granite are protected only by weather-grey unpainted shutters. The roof of tiles, with beams and huge smoke-blackened cobwebs, is undivided over the whole house, the "rooms" being low partitions fenced off with rough planks of pine. On the side of the road the granite windows frame beautiful views of a valley of fruit-trees and vines, and of the grim bare *Serra do Alvão* beyond.

The house is on two levels, and the back door of the kitchen (in front high above the road) opens against the steep rocky hill-side, on which hang terraces of vegetables and fruit-trees, and vines and walls of ferns. A little field of maize is separated from one side of the house by a wall of stones, all along the top of which are set tins and boxes of carnations, pansies, etc. From these a path leads up by ferns and fuchsias (which the peasants call *lagrimas*, 'tears') to the little *luranjal*, some of whose orange-trees are still in flower, while on others the oranges are already the size of cherries, and to a fountain of clear, icily cold water from the rock, with two fern-fringed pools. On this side of the house is an open room or covered terrace, with floor of

planks, where chairs are placed for the idle to enjoy the cool of ferns and maize and fruit-trees and the sound of running water.

Another inn, of the same region in Traz-os-Montes, stood likewise on two levels against the hill; on the road it had a *venda*, a little shop with a wide counter, two rough planks fixed to the wall as shelves, two great barrels and a few benches and boxes. On boxes, since in the whole house there were but three chairs, sat men at cards (it being a Sunday), and outside, in the road, others were playing a rough kind of quoits, while one strummed on a guitar. A wooden staircase led up by a trap-door to the upper storey of large, perfectly bare rooms divided by planks. Here a door opened on to the garden and a dog and a pig ran in and out. The smoke from the kitchen fire hung in thin blue sunbeams from the chinks in the tiles, for a feast was toward: roast *cabrinho* (kid), roast potatoes and a *cuartilho* of *vinho verde*,<sup>1</sup> at two or three *vintens* a head.

<sup>1</sup> The wine of the year, red or white, as opposed to wine that has been kept, ripe *rancio* wine—*vinho maduro*.



## CHAPTER XXV

### THROUGH TRAZ-OS-MONTES

Se alguém menosprezar teu manto pobre  
Ri-te do fatuo que se julga nobre.—THOMAS RIBEIRO.  
(If any scorn thy coat of poverty  
Laugh at the fool and his nobility.)

Traz-os-Montes é um sertão desconhecido, um retalho de Portugal segregado da civilização.—CAMILLO CASTELLO BRANCO.

(Traz-os-Montes is an unknown desert, a strip of Portugal cut off from civilization.)

IT is not altogether easy to travel in Traz-os-Montes, of which little is known and where men know little; where the mountains are more treeless than in other parts of Portugal, the villages more remote, the roads rougher and the communications more scanty. It must have been of some village of Traz-os-Montes that Guerra Junqueiro was thinking when he wrote the lines:—

n' aquella aridez flamejante  
Sem um ramo frondoso em que uma ave cante,  
N'aquelle illimitado incendio abrasador,<sup>1</sup>  
(in drought and glare,  
With not a branch in leaf, not a bird singing,  
But fiery heat unending everywhere),

or the lines—

Manhã de junho ardente. Uma encosta escavada  
Seca, deserta e nua, á beira d'uma estrada.

---

<sup>1</sup> *A Velhice do Padre Eterno.*

Terra ingrata onde a urze a custo desabrocha  
Bebendo o sol, comendo o pó, mordendo a rocha.<sup>1</sup>

(A burning morn of June. A rough hill-side  
Desolate, dry and bare, along a road.

The soil is poor, the heather barely lives  
Drinking the sun, eating the dust, biting into the rock.)

The *Serra do Alvão*, reaching to Minho, already lacks the pines of Minho's mountains and stands bald as a *sierra* of Spain, dull green, brown and blue. Goats and dark-brown cattle graze there, and on the steep hill-side little huts of granite are mills for grinding rye and maize, their wheels turned by a rushing torrent, whose churned white water is in one place thrown up against the blue sky. The grey twin-towered church of Ribeira da Pena stands solitary below, and peasants come thither to Mass on Sundays from little churchless groups of houses high on the hills, ten *kilomètres* or more distant. Above Santa Eulalia, a group of ten or twelve houses or huts with grey wooden verandahs beneath the eaves, the road still ascends shadeless through heather and bracken with a splendid view of the wide circle of *serras* to the right of Santa Eulalia. Another group of houses stands in the hills, and in these grey villages of Traz-os-Montes the carnations, nasturtiums and pansies flame and glow against the granite walls along the window-ledges of granite. Santa Marta, almost on the top of the *serra*, lies in a glaring sunshine with

<sup>1</sup> *A Lagrima.*

scarcely a tree or shade of any kind, burnt and colourless like a piece of the mountain-side, without chimneys, without glass, without a scrap of whitewash. Near it are wide fields of rye and, beyond them, a far blue *serra* below. Carazedo do Alvão lies similarly in a high plain, among corn and great stretches of grey flat rock. A stream flows sluggishly beneath little bridges of slabs like those of Dartmoor, and through meadows and heather and silver birches, where graze cattle and horses.

With more care than the houses of these villages are built the quaint granaries or *canastros* for storing rye (and in Minho for the maize), the wood of which is often carved and the posts carefully hewn. They are of wooden planks, usually painted red, and are barely a yard wide and three or four yards long (or divided at intervals of about three yards by posts of granite); they are some ten feet high, with tiny steep roofs of tiles or thatch, and stand on granite posts one or two feet from the ground.

From Villa Pouca de Aguiar, a village in a wide mountain-valley of maize and corn, chestnuts and pines, the train winds like a caterpillar across rough boulder-strewn *serras*. The little villages are like round mounds of earth and rock, roof above roof, sunbaked and chimneyless, with terraces of maize and vine-hedges along the walls of the terraces: Zimão, Tourencinho, Samardã

Fortunho and Abrambres, the last village before Villa Real. Villa Real is one of those little towns that immediately attract by their air of individual character and quaint ancientry. And it fascinates not the stranger only, since the *cantiga* says :—

Oh Villa Real alegre,  
Provincia de Traz-os-Montes,  
No dia que te não vejo  
Meus olhos são duas fontes.

(O gay Villa Real, in Traz-os-Montes province, on the day that I cannot see you my eyes are springs of tears.)

It is the capital of Traz-os-Montes and lies below the great *Serra do Marão* (1422 *mètres* in its highest point), and, during summer, in a glow of heat. The river Corgo flows black in a deep ravine, the rugged rock going down precipitously from the houses of Villa Real to a depth of many hundreds of feet. The streets, roughly paved with slabs, are narrow and irregular, the eaves of the houses jut far forward, the tiles of them painted underneath bright red or blue, pink or green. With its curious wooden balconies, grey verandahs beneath the roofs, great coats-of-arms in stone, old walls covered with vines or gay with carnations, tall stone crosses, ancient churches of beautiful arched entrances, the whole town is a delight ; and it is surrounded by a fair country of *serras* and pinewoods. Little white chapels stand high on the hills, and in Traz-os-Montes, as in Minho,

abound little granite pillars, like letter-posts, with niches (*charolas*) for roughly painted crucifixions and the souls in flame crying "Compassion for the souls," "Remember the blessed souls."

A *carro de correio* goes over a torrent-scored road to Murça; now the coachman's hat, now the letter-box hanging to the side is jerked into the road as the *carro* lurches on its way. The *serras* are treeless, covered with great shrubs of a very shrill yellow-green heather and the grey-green of broom; trees of broom line the road in places. Before Murça the road winds and loops down to a tributary of the Tua, which flows here through a deep ravine of pines and below narrow terraces (but a few feet wide) of vines, maize and vegetables. The main street of Murça, *Rua Marquez do Valle Flôr*, is of massively built houses, the divisions of the granite showing beneath the whitewash.<sup>1</sup> The street is saved from gloom by the profusion of flowers on iron balconies, wooden-posted verandahs and granite ledges—trailing wistaria and ivy geranium, vines, fuchsias, pansies, nasturtiums, hydrangeas, carnations. One house outside the village is of yellow-brown stones without mortar, like a rough wall, and seemingly

<sup>1</sup> The *Minhotos'* mania for whitewash thus continues. The inhabitants of Murça have even painted green and red the great stone wild boar in their *praça*, now that it represents no longer the House of Bragança but the Republic.



all acumble; but it is heavily loaded with wistaria, the flowers showing beautifully against the yellow stone.

The Mayor of Murça (*administrador do concelho*), a little pale-faced intelligent man, unshaven, in a worn suit of black with canvas shirt and bowler, was driving out in a carriage drawn by three horses to exercise his authority in the village of Palheiros seven *kilomètres* away. It was in the cool of the morning, and the walk would have been a pleasant one had dignity permitted. Palheiros, in a bare windy *serra* of lavender, heather and cistus, is a beautiful line of houses on a hill entirely covered with olives, above which the chimneyless roofs show a deep burnt brown. The walls are of yellow-brown stone, with external stone stairways that make the narrow irregular street even more narrow and irregular. The name of the village is "Thatched Huts," but many of the roofs have now exchanged thatch for tiles.

Some miles further on Franco, a little village of cementless yellow stone houses and rough wooden verandahs, in a shadeless heat, belongs not to the jurisdiction of Murça, but to that of Mirandella. Its streets are partly straw and partly smooth, steep rocks. The inn takes long to discover and is entered through a farmyard piled high with cistus, broom and lavender for fuel. Stone steps lead from this court up to the

kitchen and one other room, with whitewashed walls blackened by smoke. Rosaries, a few pictures of saints, some books of devotion,<sup>1</sup> a long leathern trunk with two great locks and a pattern of brass nails, chests of plain wood serving as benches, and a wooden bedstead, slightly carved, formed the principal furniture. There were no window-panes nor frames, but the doors and shutters of weather-beaten wood, worn through in places, were still solid. The woman of the inn was at work in the fields, but, with the assurance that there would be little delay—*não demora nada*—a small girl went leisurely to fetch her. In an hour a pleasant, sun-wrinkled woman arrived, smiling and eager to provide a meal, if possible. *Talvez arranja-se alguma coisa*. In half an hour she returned from scouring the village with some eggs and coffee, and presently the whole house filled with a thin blue smoke and a delicious smell of crackling thyme and lavender and cistus. *Ovos estrellados*, black coffee, an immense loaf of dark-brown rye-bread and a basket of large green figs were well worth the two hours' delay.

In Franco on a summer midday the sparrows and swallows are the only active things. A silence of overwhelming heat lies upon the

<sup>1</sup> Among others a "Manual do peregrino portuguez em Lourdes," "Moral e Doutrina Christã," "Cartilha da Doutrina Christã," the last including a geographical description of Portugal, and a table of weights and measures, etc.

glowing roofs, and the bare *serra* that surrounds them appears to burn and crumble. Only a few women creep out with their *canecas* for water; the pigs and chickens and children crouch in the narrow, irregular shade thrown from the roofs or by the rough stone stairways. A few carnations gleaming on arched wooden verandahs are the only sign of flower, herb or tree.

The *serra* is patched with large fields of rye; the harvest being carted in July, and often by moonlight to avoid the heat. Sound carries far in these silent, treeless *serras*, so that on clear, calm evenings, long after the singing of the last ox-cart on its homeward way from the fields has ceased, when the orange, brown and purple has now faded along the margin of the hills and the sky is thinly sprinkled with stars, the Angelus may be heard, thrice three notes falling softly in the silence, from some hidden tower. And then the silence deepens, and the country far and wide

tace contenta

Dell' ultima dolcezza che la sazia.

Mirandella, a little many-windowed town on the river Tua, receives the full force of the sun in the valley. From Mirandella a train now goes twice a day to Bragança, although it does not continue into Spain. The neat, tiny stations, far from their villages, have vines and carefully kept gardens full of flowers. Olives and *soutos*

of chestnuts<sup>1</sup> and wide tracts of rye surround the villages, but the hills are bare and have a Spanish look, with nothing but thyme and cistus. The soil is red-brown and brown-yellow, and flocks of black sheep are to be seen conspicuous on the bleak hill-sides. Little dissyllabic stations are a contrast of green and flowers in this bleakness : Lendas, Salsas, Rossas, Sortes ; then Rebordãos, Mosca, Bragança.

Some vines immediately surround Bragança, but otherwise it is in a circle of desolate treeless hills and fields of rye ; to the west the *Serra de Nogueira*, to the north, partly in Portugal, partly in Spain, the *Serra do Montezinho*. It is a little ancient town of small, solidly built houses, the second city of Traz-os-Montes. Like Villa Real it has coats-of-arms carved in stone, wooden upper verandahs, and eaves of stone or carved wood with a fringe of brightly-painted tiles. The Cathedral, a long, low, low-towered building in the *Praça de Almeida Garrett*, is, in appearance, the poorest in Christendom. It has eleven Canons, which sounds princely ; but the Canons only received (before the Revolution of October) six *tostões* (or half-a-crown) a day. The cloister

<sup>1</sup> The chestnuts are kept in holes scooped in the earth and stones ; but, plentiful as they are, they are soon consumed in the villages, where the yearly crop does not last six months. Potatoes in Traz-os-Montes are often called *castanholas*, no doubt from some connection with *castanha*, chestnut, although the real meaning of *castanholas* is “castañets.”



is of plain, whitewashed walls, with ceiling and floor of plain planks ; it contains a few crosses, chapels and confessionals and a store-room of wax-candles, and looks out through small windows on to a square of leeks and cabbages. One wall and the ceiling of the *Sacristia* are painted in wooden panels representing scenes from the life of St. Ignatius de Loyola. The interior of the Cathedral is likewise poverty-stricken : the floor is of rough stone, three parts covered with wood, on account of the bitter cold in winter ; there is scarcely a pillar or sculpture of any kind, and the door of the main entrance is kept shut by a great beam across it. It is all very quaint and attractively simple.

A steep street with stone steps on either side and tiny narrow by-streets goes up to the *Castello* of the Dukes of Bragança. This castle still forms a little community apart, entered beneath a double archway of its encircling wall, through a street of deep little obscure shops. Near Bragança from the road to Portello only the Castle is to be seen, a magnificent sight, the great *Torre de Menagem* and the wall and smaller towers round it, the whole town being hidden in a hollow. The *Torre de Menagem* has a single delightful window high up in the wall, and near it is a low building of beautiful blocked arches ; at its foot the tall *Pelourinho* stands on a rudely-sculptured wild boar—a stone



pillar (with sculptured figures at the top) to which offenders were fastened.<sup>1</sup> From the walls there is a full view of the bare hills stretching away to Spain, and of the town below. In another square, opening from that of Almeida Garrett, is held a market of little stalls under huge faded blue or purple umbrellas; or the wares are set forth on the cobbles, baskets of fruit and great loaves of rye-bread weighing two *kilos* and costing six *vintens*.<sup>2</sup> Bragança and Villa Real are the only two towns of Traz-os-Montes, and they have the air of villages rather than of towns. Bragança, especially in spite of its Cathedral and eight churches and eleven Canons, has the appearance of being a mere group of houses round the *Rua direita*, humbly dependent on the magnificent ancient castle of the Braganças.

<sup>1</sup> Whether the words have any or no connection, the first three syllables of *pelourinho* are pronounced exactly like "pillory." The *rollos* of Spain served the same purpose (in Quevedo's *El Buscón* the *rollo* is twice mentioned as equivalent to "scaffold"); but the *rollos* seem also to have served as a kind of judgment-seat. The famous and beautiful *rollo* at Villalon (Castille) is a square pillar covered with sculptured figures not only at the top, as is the *pelourinho* of Bragança, but down its four sides. The main street of the small village of Santa María la Rivaredonda, in Castille, is called *Calle del Rollo*. The *pelourinho* at Lisbon also bore the name *Forca dos fidalgos* (the Noblemen's scaffold), owing to the many nobles there executed.

<sup>2</sup> In Minho a maize loaf weighing about three *kilos* costs seven *vintens*.

## CHAPTER XXVI

### WHERE LUSITANIA AND HER SISTER MEET

But these between a silver streamlet glides  
And scarce a name distinguisheth the brook,  
Though rival kingdoms press its verdant sides.

—BYRON.

**B**ETWEEN Badajoz and Elvas the Guadiana runs sluggishly, half choked by sedges and cistus. Fields of borage and white parsley seem to stand for the Royalist colours, but presently appear fields of scarlet poppies under olives.<sup>1</sup> The towers and houses of Elvas now gleam from its hill above dark ramparts. Especially beautiful is the view of Elvas from another side, across a country of olives and *azinheiras*, with the *Forte de Graça* to the right and on the left the immense *Aqueducto da Amoreira* (mulberry-tree) with

<sup>1</sup> This is a matter of some importance. Columns of the Portuguese Press have dwelt upon the merit of white and blue and of green and red. The commission which decided upon green and red as the national colours declared that "Red is the colour of conquest and of laughter. . . . It is *um grito de clarim chromatisado*—a chromatised trumpet-cry." No one, it was said, finds fault with *papoulas* (poppies) because they are red ; nor was the objection that the sky is blue considered valid, since not only the Portuguese sky but all skies are blue. A chromatised trumpet-cry is evidently unbeautiful, since nothing could be uglier than both the red and the green chosen for the new flag.

its four storeys of arches. A *cantiga* says of Elvas :—

Já Elvas não é cidade,  
Nem villa lhe chamarão :  
Já os arcos da Amoreira  
Deram consigo no chão.<sup>1</sup>

But the arches of the four-centuries-old aqueduct are not fallen.<sup>2</sup>

One enters the town across a moat and beneath an archway in the fortifications, and a wide cobbled street then goes steeply up through white and yellow-washed houses, with cool spaces of acacias. The whole town gives the impression of air and cleanliness and clear though not glaring light. Nothing can be more picturesque and delightful than a market at Elvas. Laden donkeys rattle across the cobbles ; a large space of cobbles is covered with deep-red *bilhas* for sale, near which a man sits selling oranges. Groups of long-cloaked men stand at

<sup>1</sup> Elvas is no more a city,  
No longer to be called a town :  
The arches of its aqueduct  
Are all tumbled down.

<sup>2</sup> The popular rhymes of Elvas are very numerous. Another says :—

Se fôres a Elvas  
Segue direitinho,  
Olha não tropeces  
Que é mau o caminho.

(Should you go to Elvas  
See that you go straight,  
And beware of stumbling,  
For the road is in bad state.)

the corners of the streets that go steeply down from the wider space which forms a *praça*. The extraordinarily brilliant colours, especially red and orange, of the women's kerchiefs, shawls and dresses, and the red and purple or yellow trappings of the donkeys make the scene a gay one, in spite of the sombre effect of the men's dress. Even in summer they wear full long cloaks of a light-brown manufactured wool reaching to the feet, and greaves (*ceifões*) of tanned leather or, more often, of dark-brown fleeces; and they carry huge umbrellas. The trousers are worn tight down the leg and drawn closely over the knee to the ankle, where they spread out like a cup over the foot. Their immense bushy whiskers are carried round so far that scarcely an inch or two inches of unshaven chin remains.

Their gigantic black hats (*chapeos desabados*, twenty inches or more across) give, with the huge black whiskers, an extraordinary air of gloom to thin, white faces and a ruffianly air to others. Yet the general impression is of quietness and good humour, a quietness of voice and word that is not to be found in Spain; and the expression of their faces sad and serious, readily changes to a humorous smile. In no part of Portugal shall one find dresses and faces more characteristically Portuguese than here at Elvas within sight of Badajoz and Spain, nowhere is the fundamentally different temper of

the two peoples more apparent. Borrow spoke of the two countries as having been "hitherto kept asunder by the waywardness of mankind," but, although the Spanish rivers and mountain-ranges are prolonged into Portugal, the spirit of Spain ends north of the Minho and east of the Guadiana, and it becomes at once apparent that the union of the two countries is unlikely ever to be more than temporary.

The very rivers abandon their Spanish turbulence. The mighty Tagus, after its entrance into Portugal, flows broad and placid, yellow-brown through white sand and reeds, olives, ricefields and oranges, below little villages of storeyed houses, white with brown roofs; and so goes tranquilly seaward, the rocks and gutturals of Spain forgotten. Camões, indeed, speaks of the "smooth and joyful" Tagus encircling the noble ancient city of Toledo,<sup>1</sup> but the epithets suit the sleek Tejo of Portugal better than the rocky ravines and rushing waters of the Spanish Tajo.

Equally striking is the contrast of the northern frontier. Near Bragança the Sabor, here a small stream, flows through stones and sand and shingle, between little riverside meadows and fruit-trees and patches of cultivated ground, and passes

<sup>1</sup> Toledo,  
Cidade nobre e antiga, a quem cercando  
O Tejo em torno vae suave e ledo.



dark and sluggish beneath poplars and alders. Many are the birds and dragonflies ; and sweet-briar, foxgloves, cistus and meadowsweet, mint and loosestrife and lavender, grow along its banks. The green and flowers are the more precious to those who realize that not many leagues away are the colourless, treeless plains of Castille, where one may walk ten *kilomètres* on stony, dusty roads through interminable cornfields and find no larger shade than that thrown by a thistle or a milestone.

Between Bragança and Portello on the Spanish frontier there are two tiny villages. França's slate roofs and walls of yellow stone lie beneath a dark massive *serra* in tall vines and immense chestnuts along the Sabor. Portello itself, a few *kilomètres* away on the hill, is a village even smaller than França: you will be told that it has but *sete moradores*, seven heads of houses (Span. *vecinos*). Then the road goes down, now in Spain, among bare ranges of rocky hills to Calabor.

More bleak to view the hills at length recede,  
And less luxuriant, smoother vales extend ;  
Immense horizon-bounded plains succeed.

Calabor is a small picturesque heap of houses among vines and poplars, as far from Portello on the Spanish side as França is on the Portuguese. The difference between the two races is at once clearly marked. There is a far greater

show of energy, but all action seems to have been translated into speech. The language is more vigorous, the expressions more forcible, every phrase and gesture is strong and energetic ; but nothing is done. The houses are more neglected, the 'streets' of Calabor consist of sluggish streams and straw ; slovenly unshaven *carabineros* lounge in the *venta*, where the flow of noble full-sounding Castilian is a delight. A road from Calabor is "in process of construction," and a man on horseback goes daily with the letters to Puebla de Sanabria, unless in winter the snow lies too thick in the mountain passes. Though the spirit may rejoice, the flesh rebels against the improvidence of Spain after the thoughtful temper of Portugal ; for the Portuguese study how they may live with least annoyance and disquiet, but the life of the splendidly self-sacrificing Spaniard often appears to be a hard and angular preparation for death.

## CHAPTER XXVII

### ON THE OPEN ROAD

Aguilhada na mão o tardo lavrador  
Leva pela azinhaga o carro gemedor ;  
As ovelhas do bardo e as cabras do curral  
Rompem a tilintar colleando pelo val.

(Now goad in hand the peasant slowly guides  
His groaning cart along the rough hill-path.  
The sheep now from the fold, goats from the yard  
With tinkling bells are sprinkled through the valley.)

THE roads of Portugal never have the air of utter desolation frequent in the Spanish *carreteras*, in spite of the fact that on some of them the traffic is less frequent and the houses are less numerous even than in Spain, where at least the little cottages of the *peones camineros* mark each league of road. But while in Spain the dust and stones and lack of shelter make it often equally wearisome to rest or to proceed, in Portugal the difficulties in walking are of another order. For here cool shade and pleasant streams are never long absent, and the scenery offers an excuse for prolonging a rest from hour to hour. The difference between Spain and Portugal in this respect is best shown by the constant occurrence in Portuguese literature of words such as *floresta*, *herva*, *relva* (short grass, lawn), *sebe*

(hedge), etc., in contrast to the rare and poetical use of *bosque* and *selva* in Spanish. Even in summer springs and rilllets of icy transparent water are pleasantly frequent, and honeysuckle hedges or hedges of broom and foxgloves, myrtle and cistus, or recesses of cool ferns, harebells and mosses, give, in the words of Berceo, "for tired man an enviable retreat"—

Logar cobdiciadero para omne cansado ;

and the sun guards these retreats with ardent rays flashing on every side like the flaming sword that metaphorically guarded Eden. Near villages one meets troops of market-people, and donkeys disappearing under their load of scented brushwood or *carumba*.<sup>1</sup> Or a *carvoeiro*, though more often to be met with in some steep path or *azinhaga* of the hills, urges on his horse or mule laden with charcoal ; or a seller of *bilhas* passes, the red earthenware glowing between the network of his donkey's panniers. Here a donkey is driven along with a load of maize loaves for outlying houses, there the *azcoteiro* passes, his donkey laden with small barrels or tins of olive oil. Slow ox-carts 'sing' along the road, processions of men and women go to or from their work in distant fields. But the carters and *almocreves* are fewer than in Spain, and one misses the great jingling

<sup>1</sup> In Extremadura *carumba* is the name given to branches of pine cut for firing.

*diligencias*, the carts drawn by strings of four or five mules, as well as the strongly marked characters and strange scenes to be met on the roads of Spain. In Alemtejo you will meet mostly shepherds. A shepherd may often be seen sitting or standing by the road-side. His wide felt hat is of brown, and he is entirely covered with thick brown fleeces; and his umbrella of light faded blue is rolled round its giant frame so that it is not more, not much more than eighteen inches in circumference. In Minho, a land of scattered houses and villages, the wayfarers are more frequent, but on the whole the roads,<sup>1</sup> though far better kept than those of Spain (and apparently at far less cost and trouble), are most often deserted. The Spanish itinerant beggar from village to village, the blind men with their *lazarillos*, the pilgrim with staff and cockleshells, the tramp carrying his *alforjas* over his shoulder, are absent from the roads of Portugal. The distances given by the peasants are always vague, and a very real, although easily remedied, drawback of walking in Portugal is the deficiency of signposts and milestones. The signposts are exceedingly rare, the wayfarer over and over again is left to choose one of four roads at his discretion; and the milestones, that in France so pleasantly shorten the way, are here set only from league to league

<sup>1</sup> In 1904 Portugal had 11,097 *kilomètres* of roads.



and not infrequently are, like Carroll's famous chart, "a perfect and absolute blank." The peasants never say that they do not know the distance from some town or village; they stop and count out loud: "Three and four and eight and five—it will be twenty *kilotremos*"—the real distance being ten or forty. Or they will point out an *atalho*, a short cut as being but a *legoa* to a village, whereas it is found to pass over one or more mountain-ranges. Here, as in Spain, *não ha atalho sem trabalho*, there is no short cut without long toil, and one may distrust all the peasants' short cuts, while their vaguer directions, such as that one may arrive *à tardezinha*, in the little afternoon or *à noitezinha*, at the little nightfall, or that the village is *perto*, *lá acima*, or *lá embaixo*, or that one has *um boucadinho* still to go, should fill one with dismay. For *lá embaixo* may mean four or five leagues away, and a *boucadinho*, an exceedingly common word, meaning literally "a little mouthful," may be prolonged almost indefinitely. But although they are often totally misleading in their counsels, the peasant<sup>1</sup> and shepherd<sup>2</sup> and *cantoneiro* will spare no pains to set the traveller right, often going out of their way in the burning sun to point out one of their *atalhos*

<sup>1</sup> *Aldeão*.

<sup>2</sup> *Pastor* or *rebanheiro*. The word *pegureiro* is mostly to be met with in books. (Cf. the Spanish *pegujalero* or *pegujarero*.)

across the hills, and declaring, with a *não por isso*,<sup>1</sup> that their service merits no thanks. Their salutations are many and various, differing from region to region—*Bom dia, boas tardes, muito boas tardes* in the south; in the north the graver *Deus o guarde, Salve o Deus* or simply *Adeus*, or *Vá com Deus* (far less full and sonorous than the Spanish *Vaya Vd. con Dios*). The peasants raise their hats and shake hands on meeting: *Oh Senhor Migoel*, or *Como passou, Senhor João?* (How are you? how has time passed for you?), and when taking leave they say, *Passem bem* (as in Catalonia) or *Salut* or *Bem senhores, até logo* (*au revoir*). Another common salutation is *Viva*; a peasant will enter an inn with the words, “*Os senhores vivam*, Life to your lordships.”

<sup>1</sup> *No se las merece; il n'y a pas de quoi.*

## CHAPTER XXVIII

### THE PORTUGUESE LANGUAGE

He that travelleth into a country before he hath some entrance into the language goeth to school and not to travel.—BACON.

**B**ORROW spoke of “the shrill and squeaking dialect of Portugal,” but the first impression produced in a traveller from Spain, is that of the quietness of the spoken word, due in part to the softer voices. And the language is so entirely different in accent and pronunciation from Spanish that one feels in no way inclined to call it a dialect. It is strongly accented, but soft and trailing, often, indeed, rising and falling in a kind of wailing sing-song, and the sentences have melancholy cadences and dying falls. It is as different from Spanish as a stream of gentle meanderings among pliant sedges is different from a clear impetuous mountain-torrent flowing over stones.<sup>1</sup> Borrow also said: “Nothing surprised me more than the free and unembarrassed manner in which the Portuguese peasantry sustain a conversation and the purity of the language in which they express their

<sup>1</sup> Cervantes described Portuguese as “Castilian without the bones.”

thoughts ; and yet few of them can read or write." Although the peasants can still, for the most part, neither read nor write, they are generally intelligent and quick of speech, and, indeed, their Portuguese, in spite of strange confusions, is preferable to the French-Portuguese of the journalist. They may say *kilotremo* for *kilometro*, or *drumir* for *dormir*, or *sobrecristo* for *sobrescripto*, or *triato* for *theatro* ; but at least they speak in pure Portuguese, with merely some little transposition of consonants, whereas many Portuguese constantly employ foreign words and phrases. These more strict observers of accurate grammar will use such words as *grève*, *gare* (for *estação*), *poulet*,<sup>1</sup> *lanchezinho* (for a small morning meal, being 'lunch' with the diminutive *zinho* attached); and a local Republican newspaper recently founded, "Alma Algarvia" by name, rose in its fifteenth number to a high level of Franco-Portuguese in the word *parde-sou* for an overcoat. There is in Portuguese little uniformity of spelling, and Brazil adds to the confusion. C and S and Z, I and E, I and U, O and U, etc., are often interchanged, and often equally correct.<sup>2</sup> Thus one finds *igreja* and *egreja*

<sup>1</sup> The very Portuguese word for chicken, *frango*, may perhaps be derived from 'French' or 'Frank' (cf. the Span. *gallo*).

<sup>2</sup> The Republic, lavish of decrees, has attempted to fix the spelling officially, but the confusion has only become worse founded.

(church), *ceo* and *ceu* (sky), *mes* and *mez* (month), *mercearia* and *mersearia* (grocer's shop), *comboio* and *comboyo* (train), *coisa* and *cousa* (thing), *alfaiate* and *alfayate* (tailor). On the other hand, a trifling confusion may lead into serious error; *azougue* and *açougue*, for instance, are carefully distinguished, the former meaning a butcher's shop, the latter quicksilver. The S and Z at the end of words are both pronounced like a French J,<sup>1</sup> *nús* and *luz* rhyming. The pronunciation of Portuguese becomes less difficult<sup>2</sup> when it is realized that the accent is as a rule on the penultimate syllable (thus *Leiría* *Lijbóa*, *Setúbal*), and that the ~ (called *til*) stands for an N. Thus the last syllable is often scarcely pronounced, the final E and O sounding like I and U, or rather as a kind of blank sound, just implying that the vowel is there, without pronouncing it. The most puzzling peculiarity of Portuguese is the continually recurring ã, ão, õ, õe, etc. The ã (e.g., in *irmã*, sister, or *Covilhã*) is pronounced as if it were AN, *irman*,

<sup>1</sup> The S in some Basque words, e.g. *esnia*, milk, has the same sound of French J, though at the beginning of words it is pronounced *sh* (*sua*, fire, *sem*, son, being pronounced *shua*, *shem*).

<sup>2</sup> Besides the pronunciation, a great difficulty of Portuguese is that of the verbs. The irregular verbs are many and confusing; and the infinitive is also a stumbling-block. The use of the infinitive is, indeed, curious; thus, 'to go' ('for me to go' or 'for him to go') is *para ir*, but 'to go' ('for them to go') is *para irem*, or if it means 'for thee' or 'for you' or 'for us to go,' it becomes *para ires*, *irdes*, *irmos*.



Covilhan. The Õ is pronounced as the French ON : *põe* (he places) is thus pon-e(i) ; Camões is Camon-ij. The ãO similarly sounds as if it were written AN-O : French AN, and the O as a scarcely perceptible U, *pão* (bread), being thus pronounced almost exactly as the French word for peacock. In the same way the final vowel of *acho* (I find, I think) is inaudible, the word being pronounced exactly as the French for H.

But, although the final syllable is thus slurred, the Portuguese do not like a word to end in a consonant, and in pronouncing words such as *sal*, *jantar*, *Senhor* the peasant always adds an E (pronounced I). Some of the words have a delightful softness, as *chuva*,<sup>1</sup> rain, *janella*, window or *bilha*, the word used, especially in the South of Portugal, for 'pitcher' instead of the hard Spanish *cantaro*. A similar avoidance of anything harsh or abrupt is seen in the inability to say simply *sim*, yes, *não*, no. It is always *Sim*, *Senhor*, or the verb is repeated : e.g., Are you a doctor ? Answer : *Sou, sim Senhor* ; Can I find . . . ? Answer : *Acha* ; Is it . . . ? *É, sim Senhor*. Another form of this softness is the delight in diminutives, especially among the peasants. Thus the *mendigos* implore a little

<sup>1</sup> CH is pronounced as in French or as English SH. The Portuguese X (like the Catalan X) has a similar sound : e.g., *coro* (lame) is pronounced cōsh(u). In an old *Chronica* Cambridge is almost unrecognizable in the form *Cābrix*.

halfpenny, a little penny, *dezreisinhas*, *um vintezinho* ; The Spanish *Ay de mí* is *Coitadinho de mim* ; a little old woman is *uma mulherzinha* ; *obrigado* (thank you) even becomes *obrigadinho* and the name Joaquim Quinzinho. Yet Portuguese is no loose and feeble language ; on the contrary, it is a language strangely compressed and contracted, and the syllables are telescoped one into the other. So in Traz-os-Montes *quelha* (from *canelha*) is a word meaning a narrow path, and so *rela* is used for a frog (from the diminutive, *ranela*, of *rã*) ; and so we have *quente* (hot), *só* (alone), *côr* (colour), *á* (for *aa*, to the), etc. Thus it is possible to derive Izeda, a village in Traz-os-Montes, from Latin *ilex*, oak, and Assumar, a village in Alemtejo, from its Roman name *Ad Septem Aras* ; and *de léz a léz* (or *de les a les*) means from side to side (from the Latin *latus*).<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the 'les' and 'le' in English place-names.

## CHAPTER XXIX

### A MODERN PORTUGUESE POET

THE name of Camões is apt to dwarf Portuguese poetry, and the fame of the *Lusiads* to obscure Camões himself, since his beautiful lyrics, eclogues and sonnets are comparatively little read.<sup>1</sup> One of his sonnets, especially, has something of the breathless intensity of Dante :—

Alma minha gentil que te partiste  
Tam cedo d'esta vida descontente  
Repousa lá no Ceo eternamente  
E viva eu cá na terra sempre triste !  
Se lá no assento ethereo onde subiste  
Memoria d'esta vida se consente,  
Não te esqueças de aquelle amor ardente  
Que já nos olhos meus tam puro viste !  
E se vires que pôde merecer-te  
Alguma cousa a dôr que me ficou  
Da magoa, sem remedio, de perder-te,  
Roga a Deus, que teus annos encurtou,  
Que tam cedo de cá me leve a vêr-te  
Quam cedo de meus olhos te levou !

But Portuguese literature can boast a long unbroken line of singers, from the earliest romances to the intellectual revolutionaries of

<sup>1</sup> Perhaps even the *Lusiads* are more praised than read. A bookseller of Coimbra remarked that Camões had no sale, he was too well known.

the nineteenth century. The most persistent note of all this poetry is a vague sadness; the Portuguese Muse seems to have bidden all her votaries to sing sad songs, in the words of Guerra Junqueiro :—

Canta-me cantigas manso, muito manso,  
Tristes, muito tristes como a noite, o mar ;  
Canta-me cantigas para ver se alcanço  
Que a minh' alma durma, tenha paz, descanso,  
Quando a Morte, em breve, me vier buscar.

(O softly, very softly sing to me,  
Sing me sad songs, sad as the night, the sea,  
Sing songs to me and so perchance release  
My soul to sleep and to find rest and peace  
When death shall come to seek me presently.)

We find this note in popular *cantigas*, such as :—

O cantar é para os tristes,  
Quem o pode duvidar ?  
Quantas vezes já cantei  
Com vontade de chorar !

(O'singing is for those  
Who are in sadness steeped,  
O how often have I sung  
When I would fain have wept.)

as well as in the poetry of Camões :—

Amor e alegria  
Menos tempo dura  
Triste de quem fia  
Nos bens da ventura. . . .  
Alegre vivia  
Triste vivo agora,  
Chora a alma de dia  
E de noite chora.

(O love and joy  
Are swiftly dust,

Unhappy they  
 Who fortune trust. . . .  
 My life was gay  
 Now sad it creeps,  
 My heart weeps by day  
 And by night it weeps.)

*endechas* that are as sad as the lines of Christ-  
 ovam Falcão (16th Century) :—

Todo o bem é já passado  
 E passado em mal presente.

(All happiness is past and changed to present sorrow.)

So Pedro de Andrade Caminha (1520–1589)  
 says that :—

O prazer é leve,  
 Mais que o vento corre  
 E após bem tam breve  
 Toda a vida morre.

(Joy is light as a leaf,  
 Swifter than wind it flies,  
 And after pleasure brief  
 Our whole life dies.)

and so João de Deus (1830–1896), three centuries  
 later, insists that life is dust and nothingness :—

A vida é sonho tam leve  
 Que se desfaz como a neve,  
 E como o fumo se esvae ;  
 A vida dura um momento  
 Mais leve que o pensamento,  
 A vida leva-a o vento,  
 A vida é folha que cae.

(Of life how slight the show,  
 Fading as fades the snow,  
 And as smoke thinned ;  
 Lighter than thought, one brief  
 Instant set in relief,  
 Life is a falling leaf  
 Borne by the wind.)



In the sadness of Guerra Junqueiro,<sup>1</sup> most prominent of living poets of Portugal, there is a difference. His gloom is due less to unreasoned *saudade* than to definite causes. He writes of the toilers and *les misérables*, of peasants and shepherds and fishermen, of neglected schools, crumbling villages and ruined fortresses. From such a school as he describes runs, he says, "a high-road to prison; the school produces the grain for the prison cell to garner":—

D'esta escola a uma prisão  
Vae um caminho agoireiro,  
A escola produz o grão  
De que a enxovia é o celleiro.

If Guerra Junqueiro has Victor Hugo's love of rhetoric and of antithesis and some of his grandiloquence (a murderer is not a murderer, nor a sceptic a sceptic, nor a wit a wit; they are Cain, Voltaire, Falstaff), he also has Victor Hugo's great pity for the poor and helpless and, occasionally, a gleam of his incomparable poetry. Like Victor Hugo, too, he can convey a thrill of gloom and horror:—

É negra a terra, é negra a noite, é negro o luar,  
Na escuridão ouvi ! ha sombras a fallar.

(The earth is black, the night is black, and black is the moonlight. But listen ! in the darkness there are voices of shadows speaking.)

He is at his best when he writes of the

<sup>1</sup> Abilio Guerra Junqueiro, born 1850, since 1911 Minister Plenipotentiary of the Portuguese Republic in Switzerland.

humble and downcast (one small volume of his verses is entitled *Os Simples*); of the emigrants (in *Finis Patriae*):—

Olhae, olhae, vão em manadas  
Os emigrantes.  
Uivos de dó pelas estradas  
Junto dos caes, nas armuradas  
Das naus distantes . . .

Adeus divinos horisontes  
Inda a cantar nos olhos seus !  
Adeus manhãs doirando os montes,  
Herva do campo, agua das fontes,  
P'ra sempre adeus.

(See where they go, the bands of emigrants, with cries of sorrow on road and quay and distant ships. . . . Farewell to the divine horizons which their eyes still reflect, farewell to the mornings that shed gold over the mountains; grass of the fields, water of the fountains, for evermore farewell.)

of the old shepherd (in *Os Simples*):—

Candido na paz das solidões dormentes,  
Ignorando o mundo rancoroso e vil ;

(Simple in the peace of the sleeping solitudes, ignorant of the rancour and vileness of the world.)

of dark narrow streets at night, full of squalor and rubbish :—

Uma velha rua miseravel  
Cheia de podridão . . .  
A noite estava escura  
E n'esse beco a treva dir-se-hia  
Feita de tinta negra e de gordura ;

(An old and miserable street filled with decay. . . . Dark was the night and in this lane the obscurity seemed to be made of rubbish and black ink.)

of dead desolate villages :—

Andam só pela rua os porcos e as creanças,  
Fome, desolação, luto, viuvez, miseria  
Na aldeia morta ;

(The street is solitary but for pigs and children. Hunger, desolation, mourning, widowhood and want dwell in the dead village.)

of villages shadeless and silent, where the sun  
beats mercilessly :—

O meio dia batia já na torre da igreja.  
A aldeia é silenciosa e triste. O sol flameja  
Entre o surdo murmúrio abrasador da luz.  
Como n'um grande forno os grandes montes nós  
Recosem-se, espirrando as urzes d'entre as fragas ;

(Midday is striking from the church tower. The village is sad and silent. The sun flames in the dull murmur of a blaze of light, and the bare mountains lie as in a mighty furnace while the heather writhes among the rocks.)

of the return of the labourers at evening (*Ao cahir das folhas* in *A Morte de D. João*) :—

Tarde do outomno. O sol morreu ao longe  
Com pompa gloriosa  
N'uma explosão de luz ;  
E a noite cae na terra silenciosa  
Como na face livida d'um monge  
A sombra d'um capuz.  
Nas linhas sinuosas das montanhas  
Arvores collossaes  
Tomam formas fantasticas, estranhas  
De hybridos animaes.  
Objectos mui vulgares  
Durante a luz do dia  
Com as escuridões crepusculares  
Apresentam aspectos singulares  
D'uma nova poesia.

Os aldeões cantando uma canção  
 Vêm recolhendo á casa,  
 Perpassa na amplidão  
 De quando em quando a nodoa d'uma aza . . .  
 Lá vem dos aldeões o alegre bando  
 Descendo pelo outeiro,  
 Vêm rindo e vêm cantando  
 Depois de trabalhar um dia inteiro.

(An autumn afternoon. The sun had died afar with pomp and glory in an explosion of light ; and night falls silently over the earth like the shadow of a hood on a monk's livid face. In the mountains' undulating lines mighty trees take shapes fantastic and strange, as of hybrid animals. Things common in the light of day assume peculiar forms of a new poetry in the evening shadows. The peasants, singing a song, are returning home ; from time to time the shadow of wings passes across the sky. . . . There comes the gay troop of peasants down the hill ; they come with laughter and with song after a whole day spent in toil.)

And Guerra Junqueiro's muse has lighter moments. The following three verses are from an *idílio* in *A Musa em Férias* :—

Ah que inefavel pureza  
 Que candura imaculada,  
 Dir-se-hia que a Natureza  
 Nasceu esta madrugada.

. . . . .  
 O olhar d'oiro das boninas  
 Contempla o azul : ao vel-as  
 Dir-se-hia que nas campinas  
 Caíram chuvas de estrellas.

Entre as sebes orvalhadas  
 Dos rumorosos caminhos  
 As madresevas doiradas  
 Tapam as bôcas dos ninhos ;

(Pure with ineffable gleam  
 Of brightness undefiled,  
 Fair Nature, it would seem,  
 Was born this very day.

. . . . .

The daisies' golden eyes  
Watch the blue heaven : the fields,  
It seems, from out the skies  
Have received rain of stars.

In hedges bright with dew  
That hem the rustling paths  
The nests of birds from view  
Gold honeysuckle guards.)

*A Noite dos Amores* (in *A Morte de D. João*)  
gives a description of an April night :—

A noite era d'Abril. O ceo era profundo  
Como concha de luz voltada sobre o mundo.

Custava distinguir se os rios e o mar  
Seriam feitos de agua ou feitos de luar.

Fallavam entre si as arvores, as rosas  
E a immensa multidão das coisas silenciosas.

(The deepset sky upon this April night  
Bent o'er the world like a great shell of light.

And one might scarce distinguish if the streams  
And sea were made of water or moonbeams.

The mighty multitude of silent things  
And trees and flowers spoke in whisperings.)

broken by song to the accompaniment of the  
guitar :—

Bailai raparigas,  
Cantai as cantigas  
Á luz do luar.  
Erguei-vos do leito,  
Violas ao peito,  
Cantar e bailar !  
Não sente canseira  
Não pode cansar  
Quem baila na eira  
Quem canta ao luar.  
.  
.  
.



Saltai nas espigas  
 Deixai os cuidados,  
 Lá vêm as fadigas  
 Lá vae o luar,  
 E adeus as cantigas  
 E adeus o cantar.  
 Então raparigas  
 Erguei-vos do leito,  
 Violas ao peito  
 Até as quebrar.

(Dance, girls, and sing songs in the light of the moon ; rise from your beds and sing and dance to the guitars. They cannot feel tired who dance on the threshing floors and sing in the light of the moon. Leap in the corn and leave all care, soon will sorrows come and the moonlight be gone ; then farewell to singing and farewell to the dance. So then rise from your beds and strike loud the guitars.)

But an underlying sadness is not long absent :—

O raizes agudas dos ciprestes,  
 O raizes das flôres,  
 Dizei : o que fizestes,  
 O que fizestes vós dos meus amores ?

(O pointed roots of cypresses, O roots of flowers, tell me, what have you done, what have you done unto my love ?)

Sometimes Guerra Junqueiro appears to be merely weaving a fair web of many words, as in the *Oração á Luz* :—

Candida luz da estrella matutina,  
 Lagrima argentea na amplidão divina,  
 Abre meus olhos com o teu olhar !  
 Viva luz das manhãs esplendorosas  
 Doira-me a fronte, inunda-me de rosas  
 Para cantar . . .

(Bright light of the morning star, tear of silver in the sky's immensity, open my eyes to thy vision ; living light of clear mornings, gild my forehead, bathe me in roses that I may sing.)

But Guerra Junqueiro is essentially a singer of revolution, and, although he can be diffuse and vague, he can also be most pointed and satirical, dipping his pen in the bitter ink of Juvenal. He writes burning lines against the law and existing institutions :—

Eu que proscreevo o algoz eu exigil-o-hei  
Para enforcar sómente esse bandido—a Lei.

(I, who the executioner would banish, yet demand  
That he should hang one brigand—called the Law.)

If, however, it is true, as a contemporary poet writes of him, that as each belief falls before his onslaughts, he may sing songs of victory but it is with sadness in his heart,<sup>1</sup> he also has the poet's love of tradition. Certainly, when the Portuguese revolution began with the murder of the King and Crown Prince in 1908, he must have thought of his own lines (in *O Crime*):—

E é doloroso ver dentro d'um atauda  
Um corpo juvenil, ensanguentado e frio.

<sup>1</sup> Queiroz Ribeiro in *Tardes de Primavera*:—

Vae destruindo as crenças uma a uma . . .  
E ao vel-as dissipar-se como espuma  
Emquanto elle ergue os hymnos da victoria  
Ha lagrimas bem tristes na sua alma !

(He destroys belief after belief, and, as he sees them melt away like foam, his lips sing songs of triumph but tears of sadness are in his heart.)

But many of his most fervent verses prophesy upheavals, and not in Portugal only :—

Adest, adest fax obvoluta sanguine atque incendio.

An ode addressed years ago to “cynical England, shameless, drunken England,”

Ó cinica Inglaterra, ó bebeda, impudente, accuses her of giving to the dark Continent Gospels and gin, *evangelho e aguardente*, and of bartering her God for rubber and ivory ; but a judgment is at hand, for the poet decrees that :—

Hão de os lords rolar em postas no Tamisa

(The Lords shall float in pieces down the Thames.)

and this uncomfortable voyage of the wicked aristocracy, with draggled ermine robes and bobbing coronets, is to be followed by a general destruction of

Bancos, docas, prisões, arsenaes, monumentos, the end of the Lords being, as the poet thus shrewdly notices, the beginning of the end of England. But we prefer the Guerra Junqueiro who leaves rhymed prose and rhetoric for true feeling and poetry in singing of the peasants of Portugal and their hardy toil for bread :—

Os lentos aldeões vão recolhendo á choça.

# INDEX

## A

Abrantes, 121  
 Afonso IV., 104-109  
 Afonso Domingues, 112  
 Afonso Henriques, King, 103, 150  
 Aguas de Moura, 67  
 Alcacer do Sal, 23, 64, 66  
*Alcachofras*, 15  
 Alcoba, The, 102  
 Alcobaca, 102-110, 113  
 Aldeia do Carvalho, 133  
 Alentejo, 22, 24, 27-53, 67, 170, 196-198, 204  
 Alfama, 81-84  
 Alfonso the Learned, 153  
 Algarve, 54-62  
*Algarvios*, 4, 17, 56  
 Alhos Vedros, 67  
 Aljubarrota, 103, 110, 111  
 Almeida-Garrett, Vizconde de, 73, 84, 87, 155, 164, *quoted*, 8, 9, 73, 98, 148  
*Almocreves*, 106, 182  
 Amorim, Francisco Gomes de, *quoted*, 163  
 Andrade Caminha, Pedro de, *quoted*, 214  
 Angeja, 158  
 Ave, The, 178  
 Aveiro, 157, 158  
*Azulejos*, 74, 145, 170, 175

## B

Baça, The, 102  
*Barretes*, 68  
*Barriles*, 17

Batalha, 111-113  
 Beckford, William, 96, 97  
 Beira Alta, 141  
 Beira Baixa, 24, 67, 122, 123, 128-141  
 Beja, 50-53, 55  
 Belem, 85-88  
 Belem, Torre de, 88  
 Bernardes, Diogo, *quoted*, 28, 166  
*Bilhas*, 31, 32, 51, 61, 66, 68, 116, 165, 169, 197, 203, 210  
*Bishop's alms*, 57, 58  
*Boeirinhas*, 165  
 Borba, 29, 30  
*Borborinhos*, 15, 170  
 Braga, 21, 174, 175  
 Bragança, 23, 193-195  
 Brites of Aljubarrota, 110  
*Broa*, 133, 170, 171  
 Bussaco, 19, 142-147

## C

Cabeceiras, 179  
 Calabor, 200, 201  
 Caldas da Rainha, 110  
 Caldas do Gerez, 129  
 Cambridge, 210  
 Camões, Luiz de, 22, 87, 155, 212, *quoted* 3, 8, 12, 18, 27, 28, 36, 44, 86, 98, 99, 106, 107, 111, 115, 118, 128, 132, 136, 142, 148, 152, 153, 162, 199, 213  
*Canastros*, 187  
*Canecas*, 159  
*Canellas*, 158  
*Cangas*, 159, 165, 171

*Cantigas*, 7, 10, 11, 16, 54, 188, 197, 213  
*Carazedo do Alvão*, 187  
*Carpimentos*, 15  
*Carrinhas*, 59, 60  
*Carros*, 27, 37; *de correio*, 20, 41, 42, 166, 189  
*Carvoeiros*, 63  
*Casa Branca*, 64  
*Castello Branco*, 23, 123  
*Castello Branco*, Camillo, *quoted*, 185  
*Castilho*, João de, 86, 120  
*Castro*, Iñez de, 104-109, 152  
*Castro*, João de, 96  
*Cavado*, The, 165, 174, 176  
*Caycos*, 161  
*Cea*, 131  
*Ceifões*, 27, 198  
*Chão das Macãs*, 119  
*Charnecas*, 26, 34, 37, 48, 49, 63, 170  
*Chelleiros*, 100  
*Chiar*, 171, 172  
*Chimneys*, 55, 136, 178, 181  
*Cholocas*, 169  
*Cintra*, 77, 89-98  
*Coimbra*, 106, 148-156  
*Collares*, 98  
*Constança*, wife of Infante Pedro, 105, 106  
*Corgo*, The, 188  
*Coroças*, 171, 173  
*Covilhã*, 23, 131-133  
*Crossas*, 173

## D

*Deus*, João de, 214  
*Diligencias*, 67, 166, 167  
*Diniz*, King, 103, 114, 115, 151; *quoted*, 124  
*Douro*, province of, 148, 157, 158  
*Douro*, The, 157, 160-162  
*Duarte*, King, 112

## E

*Eça de Queiroz*, *quoted*, 5, 12, 71, 126  
*Education*, 24, 137  
*Elizabeth*, Saint, Queen of Portugal, 76, 114, 150, 151, 153  
*Elvas*, 168, 196, 197  
*Ericeira*, 100  
*Esmoriz*, 158  
*Espinho*, 158  
*Estalagens*, 21  
*Estarreja*, 158  
*Evora*, 43, 44-49, 51  
*Extremadura*, 24, 53, 63-70, 91, 95, 100-102, 121, 122

## F

*Falcão*, Christovam, 214  
*Faro*, 56-59  
*Ferradas*, 159  
*Ferragudo*, 60  
*Fielding*, Henry, 76  
*França*, 200  
*Franco*, 190-192

## G

*Galeras*, 68  
*Gama*, Diogo de, 121  
*Gama*, Vasco de, 85-87, 94  
*Garrett*, João Baptista da Silva Leitão Almeida. *See* Almeida-Garrett  
*Goes*, Damião de, *quoted*, 8 6  
*Gorros*, 37, 68  
*Gouvea*, 131, 140, 141  
*Gradil*, 100  
*Gregory XV.*, Bull of, 145  
*Guadiana*, The, 44, 196  
*Guarda*, 123  
*Guerra Junqueiro*, Abilio, 39, 49, 134, 185, 212-222  
*Guimarães*, 171



## H

- Henrique, 'the Seafarer,' 121  
 Herculano, Alexandre, 87, 112;  
     *quoted*, 54, 89, 157  
*Honey*, 36  
*Hospedarias*, 20-22  
*Hôtels*, 20, 21, 23

## J

- Janeiras*, 14  
*Janelleira*, 61  
 João I., 93, 111, 112  
 João III., 93, 121  
 João de Ruão, 150

## L

- Language*, 207-211  
 Lanheze, 167, 169  
 Leça, The, 164  
 Leiria, 114-117  
 Lima, The, 166  
 Lisbon, 71-84  
 Liz, The, 115  
 Luzo, 142, 147

## M

- Mafra, 20, 95, 99, 100, 113  
*Maios*, 14  
*Malhadas*, 28, 63  
 Manoel I., 86, 87, 94  
 Manteigas, 131, 137, 139, 140,  
     141  
 Manueline style, 86, 87, 113,  
     120, 143  
 Mattosinhos, 164  
 Mendes-Leal, José da Silva,  
     *quoted*, 85  
 Mindello, 164  
 Minho, 14, 15, 163-179, 186, 187,  
     204  
*Minhotos*, 170  
 Mirandella, 192

- Monchique, 60  
 Mondego, The, 108, 148, 149,  
     150, 152-154  
*Money*, 22, 173  
 Monserrate, Quinta de, 96, 97  
*Mulhelhas*, 172  
 Murça, 189, 190

## N

- Nazareth, 102  
*Nightwatchmen*, 39  
*Noras*, 110

## O

- Ocresa, The, 123  
 Odelousa, The, 61  
 Oporto, 157-162, 171  
*Ourivesarias*, 159, 168  
 Ovar, 158  
*Ox-carts*, 68, 69, 172, 173

## P

- Paes, Gualdim, 119, 120  
 Palheiros, 190  
*Palhoças*, 173  
*Peasants*, 3-17, 27, 29, 61, 64,  
     65, 68, 69, 70, 77, 122, 129,  
     133, 138, 140, 167, 170, 177,  
     178, 198, 205-208  
 Pedro, King, 104, 105, 106  
*Peixeiras*, 78-80, 101  
*Pelourinhos*, 195  
 Philip II., King of Spain, 87  
 Philippa of Lancaster, 93, 112  
 Pinhal Novo, 67  
 Poceirão, 67  
 Ponte do Lima, 174  
*Porborinhos*, 170  
 Portimão. *See* Villanova de  
     Portimão  
*Portuguesa*, A, 41  
 Pova de Varzim, 163  
 Prado, 174

## Q

Praia da Rocha, 60  
Praia das Macãs, 98

## Q

Quinta de Sardinha, 118  
*Quintas*, 10, 173

## R

*Rebanheiros*, 134  
Redondo, 39  
Regoa, 162  
*Republicas*, 156  
Resende, Garcia de, 107-109  
Ribeira da Pena, 180, 181, 186  
Ribeiro, Bernardim, *quoted*, 33  
Ribeiro, Thomas, *quoted*, 54, 185  
*Roads*, 33, 37, 64, 65, 123, 202-205  
*Rollos*, 195  
Rosas, 177, 178

## S

Sá de Miranda, Francisco de, 155; *quoted*, 114, 115  
Sá e Meneses, Francisco de, *quoted*, 157, 164  
Sabor, The, 199, 200  
Sado, The, 64, 66  
*Saloios*, 77  
Santa Clara a Velha, 60  
Santa Eulalia, 186  
Santa Marta, 186, 187  
Santarem, 106  
São Marcos da Serra, 60  
São Martinho, 102  
São Migoel de Machende, 42  
Sebastian, King, 4, 67  
Serra do Alvão, 183, 186  
— do Barroso, 173, 176  
— da Cabreira, 176  
— do Caldeirão, 60  
— dos Candieiros, 102, 111

Serra de Caramullo, 141  
— do Carvalho, 175  
— da Estrella, 122, 128-141, 148  
— da Gardunha, 133  
— do Gerez, 128, 176  
— de Louzã, 155  
— do Marão, 188  
— de Monchique, 60, 61  
— do Osso, 34, 41  
Simide, 155  
*Soalheira*, 60  
Sobreira, 122  
*Socos*, 159, 169  
*Surrões*, 43

## T

Tagus, The, 72, 77, 80, 88, 95, 199  
Tamega, The, 179  
Teixosa, 133  
Thomar, 119-121  
Torrão, 31  
Torres Vedras, 100  
Traz-os-Montes, 24, 172, 173, 180-195, 199-201  
Tua, The, 189, 192

## U

Urban VIII., Bull of, 143, 144

## V

Vallado dos Frades, 102, 110  
*Vendas*, 16, 17, 37, 64, 65, 69, 110, 137, 138, 180-184, 190-191  
Verdelhos, 134, 136-138  
Vianna do Alemtejo, 37  
Vianna do Castelo, 166, 167  
Vicente, Gil, *quoted*, 8, 9, 50, 63, 85, 127-131

Villa do Conde, 163  
 Villa Nova de Gaia, 161  
 Villa Nova de Ourem, 119  
 Villanova de Portimão, 59, 60  
 Villa Pouca de Aguiar, 187  
 Villa Real, 188, 195  
 Villa Viçosa, 30, 39

## W

Wellington, The Duke of, 142,  
 160

## Z

Zezere, The, 136, 139, 140









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